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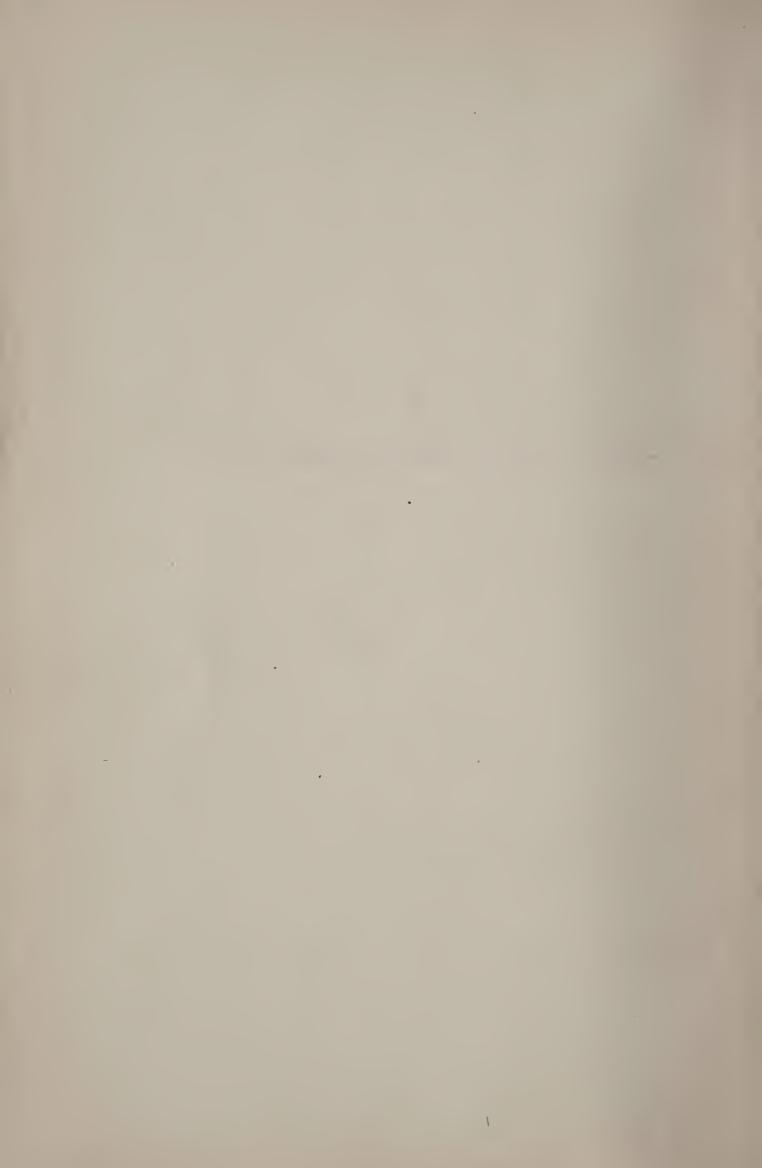
RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION.

II.

ENGLISH LITERATURE.



I. RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION.



Chicago Correspondence Schools

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RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION.

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Rhetoric and Composition.

INTRODUCTORY.

Rhetoric is the art of using language effectively, as grammar is the art of forming sentences with logical correctness. Rhetoric, however, is purely an art. Unless by the study of it we gain skill, our labor has been useless. It therefore behooves us that we take good care that at the end of our studies, or, if we are teachers, at the end of our teaching, there be some appreciable resulting skill.

There are two ways in which we may improve our style. One is by criticising our work after we have actually written something, and removing errors and defects. In the old rhetorics this is always the matter of chief importance. The other method is by acquiring habits which will make us unconsciously write better to begin with. To cause such habits to form is the direct object of all modern child study and instruction in *composition* as opposed to the more ambitious rhetoric.

The formation of good habits seems to present the most difficult possible problem to teachers and students, and it is only recently that much progress has been made in this direction. And yet the nusician, the painter, the carpenter go about instructing their pupils by helping them to get the "knack" of skilful work: why does not the teacher of rhetoric do the same?

Probably the real reason why the teacher of literary art does not proceed about his business in the same fashion as the teacher of all other arts and handicrafts, is that in few cases does the teacher of rhetoric himself possess the practical skill which we always consider indispensable in the master of any of the other arts. No one would think of studying carpentry of a man who had merely conned a book on joinery. Rather, we would choose the best practical carpenter to be found. Much the same holds true of music: we learn music of musicians who have first made some reputation as real performers; and painting of painters whose pictures we have come to admire. But the teacher of rhetoric is seldom, if ever, a professional, or in any sense a skilled writer. Even the authors of textbooks on rhetoric are almost bunglers in the art which they would teach to others.

And yet in the study of language more than in any of the so-called "arts" we may all find "masters" easily at hand in the masterpieces of standard literature. All we need is specific directions as to how we should use these masters, for they are dumb except to those who have ears to hear.

There are certain practical difficulties in the study of English which we should understand clearly at the outset. The first is that we cannot speak or write effectively unless we have something to say which some one we know will actually be interested in hearing. The real essence of rhetoric is to *interest*, and we cannot interest air; and to interest ourselves merely does not count (as the children say). Thus we perceive that the really essential, all-important element is entirely wanting in two very common

classes of compositions, those which are written in school as exercises merely because a teacher gives a direction to say something about Nobility or Electricity or My Walk to School or Sarah's visit to the Wood, and, secondly, those which are written by would-be authors because they think it would be "nice" to be famous. No one should ever be expected or induced to express ideas which are not, or may not be, valuable to some one else. It is equally a mistake to force pupils in school to write hated "compositions," and to encourage young men and women to try to become famous by the perpetration of platitudes on paper. If we can learn to keep still unless we have something to say that we know some one will wish to hear, we have learned the first great lesson in the use of English; and few of us realize how great and important this lesson is.

The second point is that we can hardly hope to write better if we merely practice over and over on the few awkward phrases we already know. We may write enough to fill thousands of volumes, and yet never gain one iota of skill in *effective* expression. The advice, "Practice, Practice, Practice," is not so good as it seems, since it suggests only a half truth. If we practice on that which is real literature, we will certainly imbibe some of the essence of real literature; but if we practice only on what we are ourselves capable of producing (which we may safely presume is very far from real literature), we do no more than mark time: it is as if we were trying to lift ourselves by our bootstraps.

There is a very simple method by which both of these difficulties may be met, and this method has been making rapid progress in schools throughout the United States. It is to confine school exercises in composition largely to imitations and reproductions of simple masterpieces, the easiest of which for this purpose are stories that may be told orally as well as in writing. The masterpiece furnishes the thought that is interesting and worthy of the highest expression; and it presents models of skilful sentence and paragraph structure, the copying of which will instill the desired habits.

Of course, it is extremely important that children be taught to observe and think; but this is scarcely the province of language instruction, except so far as the observing and thinking applies to words and sentences. Every school lesson should be a lesson in observing and thinking: geography, about persons and places; history, about persons and times; and the emotional element may be found in the school reader and in declamations and recita-All these should form the basis for the exercise of expression in language, and in connection with each of these and other lessons pupils should be led to express themselves whenever they have anything to express; so that in this way all necessary exercise in original expression may be obtained. It is very seldom that in an abstract and separate way pupils will have ideas worth expressing; and it is a positive detriment that they be forced to attempt expression when they have no ideas to express.

When anything has been written that deserves attention, it is proper that the second phase of rhetoric be brought into operation, and the pupil be required to criticise and test his work. For this purpose a few canons of the art must be mastered. It is a great mistake, however, to teach too many rules, for if too many are taught all will be forgotten.

I. WORDS.

The first act in composition is to choose suitable words to convey our meaning. In regard to the choice of words, a few brief rules may be given.

1. Words must be so chosen that they will best

convey the meaning to the hearer or reader.

This seems a simple direction, but it is not always followed. We may be tempted to use a word from a foreign language, or one that has passed out of use in our own language (for example, some words found in the Bible or in Chaucer or Shakspere); or we may use a word that is understood only in a certain part of the country (as gums for rubber overshoes, or mucker for a boy in a college town who is not connected with the college); or we may use technical or scientific terms in speaking to unscientific people; or we may try to use words which we do not fully understand and which we are therefore in danger of using incorrectly.

A word not properly an English word is called a

Barbarism.

A good word used incorrectly is called an *Impro*priety.

Good use is National, Reputable, and Present.

The following is from Barrett Wendell's English Composition:—

"Improprieties, then,—the misuse of words which are actually in the language,—are by far the commonest and most insidious offenses against good use in words. It is convenient to study anything in a somewhat exaggerated form. Crude Impropriety is a perennial form of humor; it is what makes us laugh at the speeches of Mrs. Quickly, of Dogberry, of Mrs. Malaprop; at the spelling of Hosea Biglow or of Josh Billings. And two speeches of Dogberry's will perhaps afford us as good examples as we need. When one of his prisoners calls him an

ass, he exclaims, 'Dost thou not *suspect* my place?' and a little later, in regret that the contempt of court is unrecorded, 'O that he were here to write me down an ass!' By asking why Dogberry falls into these two errors, we may discover the chief reason why anybody ever falls into Impropriety. The reasons for the two are distinct: when he says, 'Dost thou not *suspect* my place?'—meaning respect—he deliberately uses a bigger word than he can understand; when he says, 'O that I had been writ down an ass!' he has lost his head, and so in excitement utters a phrase which in cooler moments he would understand to mean something very different from what he intends. One or the other of these reasons I have found to underlie nearly all the Improprieties I have come across."

2. Words must be correctly arranged in sentences according to the rules of grammar.

A grammatical error is in reality a logical inaccuracy or contradiction, and so must necessarily confuse the thought or distract the attention, even if the correct meaning can be gathered by the hearer or reader.

Rhetorically, an error in grammar is called a *Solecism*.

3. Not only should words be good English words which will be clearly understood by the reader or hearer, and be grammatically correct as arranged in sentences, but they should be *effective*. This is the great rhetorical quality that is the most positive essential; for any passage may be absolutely correct, and yet have no more value than if it were Chinese or monkey gibberish; and that which is effective will serve its purpose even if it is disfigured with grammatical incorrectness and all kinds of barbarisms and improprieties.

To Obtain a Good Vocabulary.—The number of words commonly used in simple conversation is not large—probably not over three or four thousand at the most. Many of these words, moreover, are not

suitable for careful writing. Slang may be good in some kinds of conversation. Familiar colloquialisms heard on every side serve their purpose in very commonplace and ordinary interchange of ideas. When the ideas are loftier, and the manner of expression sufficiently formal for writing, we need better and more numerous words. How shall we find them?

The answer is, By habitual reading of standard literature

No person who is not an habitual reader can ever hope to be an accomplished writer. There was a time when refined conversation would take the place of reading; but the art of conversation is to-day practically lost. Reading alone can be recommended to the one ambitious to write and speak with wider range and greater effectiveness.

The habit of reading good books will in very large measure counteract any tendency to vulgarity or carelessness of language. One possessed of this habit need not con the long lists of barbarisms and improprieties given in rhetorics; because in his reading he will soon discover that he finds none of these, and instinctively he will avoid their use.

Moreover, nothing is more important for effectiveness than a good knowledge of the fine shades of meaning which many words possess. These fine shades would be unknown even to one who had learned the dictionary by heart if the habitual reading of the great masters had been neglected.

However, reading for a vocabulary is not the careless and promiscuous skimming of books. It is necessary to form the habit of observing and studying new words as one meets them. At first frequent

reference to an unabridged dictionary is essential. Afterward one will think chiefly of the new meanings and uses which one finds in different authors. new use of an old word will attract the attention as certainly as an entirely new and unknown word.

The Selection of Words.—The problem which seems most often to confront the novice in writing is, Is this word a good one? Is that the most effective?

No definite answer can be given in most cases to such a question. Words must be chosen according to the needs of the reader. The character, education, and condition of mind of the reader are the all essential elements in the case. The invariable rule is. Choose the words which best appeal to the particular reader for whom the words are intended.

In his Talks on Writing English, Arlo Bates says:

"The first assumption in writing is a reader. This might seem too obvious to need to be said; but the case is not unlike that of dear old ladies whose missing spectacles are on the top of their white-haired heads. The fact is obvious even to absurdity, yet it is necessary to mention it. Untrained writers seldom consider the reader; and many men of no small reputation not infrequently go on for page after page without the smallest notion of the person addressed. They are pleasing themselves by saying things, but they are not considering any reader who will be compelled by irresistible interest to heed these when said. Only the best trained writers may be counted upon always to have in mind and to realize a definite audience.

"We are none of us likely soon to get beyond the necessity," or at least the advisability, of selecting in writing some definite persons, some club, or body with which we are familiar. and of addressing whatever we write directly to this audience. To writers learning their profession the habit of writing for an actual, human, definite reader is invaluable. Too much that is printed has the appearance of being mere memoranda for the use of the person putting it down. No reader has been assumed in the writing, and no person feels like claiming it for his own in the reading. Amateurs are apt to write either for themselves or the universe-sometimes not seeming sure that the two are not identical; and perhaps one fault is as bad as the other."

This rule (that we must choose the word best adapted to the reader) will determine the question whether long words or short are better, Saxon words or Latin. Long words are good, and so are short words; we need the Saxon words, and we need the Latin. When rhetoricians advise us to use only short Saxon words so far as possible, they suggest but half a truth. In simple story-telling or exposition for children and common people, short Saxon words are good. But the rhetorician himself does not use them to the exclusion of longer words from the Latin. His pages are very liberally sprinkled with the very words he declaims against; and it is very proper that they should be. Latin words are more sonorous than Saxon, and so are better adapted to oratory. They have something of the flavor of technicality and generalization.

Avoid Slang and Fine Writing.—There are two extremes which are equally bad. It is a mistake, in ordinary composition, to be too familiar and colloquial—in other words, to be slangy; and it is equally a mistake to try to be fine. Nearly all young writers, being inexact in their thought, see only two ways of attracting attention. One is to be very familiar and (as they call it) "racy;" the other is to be what is misnamed "poetic" or "elegant" or "dignified"—in other words, to indulge in fine writing that is filled with "glittering generalities," long Latin words and sounding phrases.

The secret of success in writing is to fix the mind clearly and completely upon the reader, and write as if you were speaking directly to him about something you know he will wish to hear of. If you can get this idea once fixed in the mind, there will be

little temptation either to slang or to fine writing, to barbarisms or to improprieties.

Professor Genung in his *Practical Rhetoric* sums up his suggestions in regard to the choice of words in the following rules:

- 1. In the choice of words, let the paramount consideration be exactness.
- 2. Seek to have at command more than one expression for the same thing.
- 3. Cultivate the habit of observing the derivation and history of words.
- 4. Enlarge your vocabulary by diligent study of usage in the best writers.
- 5. Beware of words too new to have a recognized place in the language.
- 6. Be sure of ample justification before coining new formations or compounds.
- 7. Be suspicious regarding current newspaper and collequial terms.
- 8. Do not, out of mere affectation, indulge a fancy for quaint or archaic terms.
- 9. Do not employ in general literature words peculiar to some limited section of the country.
- 10 Do not use technical terms where they are not likely to be understood.
- 11. Do not use an unnaturalized foreign word unless you are sure it expresses an idea for which there is no fitting term in English.
- 12. Seek to use both Saxon and Classical derivatives for what they are worth, and be not anxious to discard either of them.
 - 13. Beware of the false garnish of "fine writing."
- 14. Cherish wisely the strong and homely idioms of the language.
- 15. Use no expression thoughtlessly, or merely because it is current, but from your own independent recognition of its fitness.

II.

FIGURES OF SPEECH.

Mr. Barrett Wendell, in his *English Composition*, has clearly pointed out that the value of words lies not alone in what they *denote* on their face, but quite as much on what they suggest by the association in our minds of ideas quite different from those denoted by the words. This suggestiveness he terms *connotation*. He says:

"Our words are at most so few, our ideas at the very least so many, that almost every word we possess must be pressed into service for very various ideas; and what is more, that no idea can ever be called up in our minds by a word, without the suggestion of a considerable number of others along with it. Every word we use in defining our ideas for ourselves must not only name an idea, but along with it must suggest, consciously or unconsciously, a very curiously complex set of others. Every word we use in imparting our ideas to other people must likewise arouse in our minds a similar curious complexity of conscious or sub-conscious associations. Here is a fact that we can no more escape than we can escape the absolute authority of good use itself.

* * * * * *

"It is safe to assume, I think, that the name of Mr. Jefferson Davis, calling up a slim figure with a slight beard under the chin, would arouse one set of emotions in a citizen of Massachusetts, and quite another in a citizen of Mississippi. Sensible people, wishing to produce distinct rhetorical effects, should govern their use of the name Jefferson Davis accordingly. And here we may see, as distinctly as anywhere, the two functions that every word, every name of an idea, must perform: in the first place, it names something in such a way as to identify it; in the second, it suggests along with it a very subtile and variable set of associated ideas and emotions.

"These two functions, hardly ever quite distinct in style, must both be kept in mind by whoever would use words—and, as we shall see later, by whoever would compose words—with any approach to certainty. It is worth while, then, to name them now distinctly. The names I give them, are, I believe, sanctioned by no small amount of usage; but even were there no

usage behind them at all, I should feel at liberty, with such definition as I hope I have given them, to use them in this book. A word may be said, then, to denote the idea it identifies; Jefferson Davis denotes the slim gentleman with a slight chin beard. A word may be said to connote the thoughts and emotions that it arouses in the hearer or reader, in whose minds these thoughts and emotions habitually eluster about the precise idea it denotes; in the North, for example, the name Jefferson Davis connotes the idea of treason; in the South, the idea of patriotism. What we have seen true of this proper name I shall ask you to believe true, in a greater or less degree, of every word we use."

This suggestive quality of words and phrases is one of the most essential in enabling us to express a great variety of delicate ideas in short space. Saying, or suggesting, a great deal in a very short space constitutes vividness, liveliness, and all that makes one piece of writing eagerly read while another is voted dry.

The suggestive quality of words has been analyzed and divided into classifications called Figures of Speech. They may be grouped under three heads, namely: 1. Comparison; 2. Condensation; 3. Contrast.

1. Figures of Comparison.—The easiest way of describing any object that is unknown is by comparing it to some object that is known. For example, suppose you had never seen a zebra. You might spend an hour giving details in regard to it; but all that you would say could be expressed as well by stating that a zebra is like a horse and also like a mule, differing from these chiefly in the fact that it is striped in color. Such a comparison between things of the same class does not constitute a figure of speech; but when we compare things essentially unlike, as a strong man to an oak tree, we use what

is called a figure of speech. There are two leading figures of comparison:

Simile—a direct comparison, by use of the words like or as.

Example: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water."

Metaphor—an implied comparison assuming or stating that one thing is another when we mean simply that it is *like* another.

Example: "Music is both sunshine and irrigation to the mind."

Personification is a metaphor which consists in comparing an inanimate thing or an animal to a person. It is simply treating the animal or thing as we would treat a person, as when we refer to a ship as she, the sun as he, etc.

2. Figures of Condensation.—The direct object in the use of one of these figures is to call up a vivid picture by selecting some single detail which will suggest the associated ideas. Success in the use of them consists in knowing what is the really suggestive detail.

There are two of these figures, Synecdoche and Metonomy.

Synecdoche consists in using a part for the whole. The most striking detail is selected, and that suggests all the other details, as when we speak of a fleet of ten ships as a "fleet of ten sail."

Other examples: He will bring my gray hairs to the grave. All hands to the pump!

Metonomy consists in using some associated object or detail in place of the object really meant, as in saying "The kettle boils," when we mean the water in the kettle boils.

Other examples: Beware of the bottle! The pen is mightier than the sword.

3. Figures of Contrast.—Nothing gives so much strength as contrast. Place a mountain by a mole-hill and the mole-hill seems smaller, while the mountain seems larger for the comparison. In all art liveliness and vigor are given by contrast.

Antithesis is a direct comparison of opposed objects. It consists in deliberately placing two ideas as different as possible side by side for the sake of the effect that will be produced.

Example: "The Puritans hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it

gave pleasure to the spectators."—Macaulay.

Climax.—Of a somewhat different kind is the figure called climax. The word means "a ladder," and as a figure of speech it signifies a gradual rising from the low to that which is higher. It depends upon the notion that a thought must have progress, united to the idea of the strength given by contrast.

Example: "It is an outrage to bind a Roman citizen; to scourge him is an atrocious crime; to put him to death is almost parricide; but to crucify him—what shall I call it?"—Cicero.

Weak writers often fall into the vice of anticlimax, or placing the weaker word or phrase after the stronger, so suggesting progression downward instead of upward. But anti-climax is often used legitimately for humorous effect.

Irony.—In this figure of speech the contrast is suggested by saying the opposite of what is meant in such a way that it appears absurd and the truth is bitingly apparent. There is no essential difference between the figure which consists in saying the oppo-

site of what is meant for the sake of fun and good humor, and that which consists in saying the opsite for the purpose of expressing bitterness; but the word *irony* is usually employed to imply bitterness.

Example: "I remember as a boy how a great party persisted in declaring Caroline of Brunswick was a martyred angel. So was Helen of Greece innocent. She never ran away with Paris, the dangerous young Trojan. Menelaus, her husband, ill-used her; and there was never any siege of Troy at all. So was Bluebeard's wife innocent. She never peeped into the closet where the other wives were with their heads off.....Yes, Caroline of Brunswick was innocent and Madame Lafarge never poisoned her husband; and Mary of Scotland never blew up hers; and poor Sophia Dorothea was never unfaithful; and Eve never took the apple—it was a cowardly fabrication of the serpent's."—Thackeray.

Other Figures of Speech.—There are a number of

Other Figures of Speech.—There are a number of less important figures of speech which might possibly have been grouped under one or other of the above leading divisions. They have characteristics of their own, however, which make it better to treat

them separately.

Allegory is a metaphor sustained throughout an entire composition, usually a personification in which imaginary personages stand for abstract qualities. The best known allegory is Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

Exclamation and Interrogation are sometimes classed as figures of speech. As such they are figures of condensation, a complex emotion being suggested by an exclamation, or the answer to a question being vividly suggested by asking the question and leaving

the reader or hearer to supply the answer. In such cases the answer must be obvious beyond a doubt. In both these figures of speech the emotion suggested by the method of using language is the essential addition to a simple and plain statement of fact.

Apostrophe consists in addressing the absent as if present. Often it is at the same time a personification, as when Webster exclaims, "Advance, then, ye future generations! We would hail you as you rise in your long succession," etc.

Hyperbole consists in a deliberate exaggeration for the purpose of adding impressiveness. As a figure of speech it must be recognized by the reader or hearer as an exaggeration induced by the emotion of the speaker or writer. Unless the emotion roused in the reader is sufficient to justify the exaggeration, the effect fails.

Example: "I saw their chief, tall as a rock of ice; his spear the blasted fir tree; his shield the rising moon; he sat on the shore like a cloud of mist on the hill."—Ossian. (It will be seen that this is also an elaborate metaphor.)

Epigram is a figure of contrast consisting in a brief statement which contains some sharp and unexpected turn.

Examples: Conspicuous by its absence. Language is the art of concealing thought. What I have written, I have written. He is full of information—like yesterday's *Times*. Lapland is too cold a country for sonnets. Those laborious orators who mistake perspiration for inspiration.

All figures of speech rightly used give life and vividness to the expression; but there are dangers

which must be carefully avoided. When a comparison with two or three things is suggested in the same sentence we have the mixed metaphor (as, for example, "The world should throw open all its avenues to the passport of a woman's bleeding heart"). In figures of condensation we may condense so much that the meaning is left in doubt instead of being made more vivid. Antithesis may be used so frequently as to weary, or it may allure us into distorting the truth that we may make out our contrast (as is the case sometimes in Macaulay, especially in his History of England). Irony is no longer irony when the mind becomes confused between the truth and the ironical statement, and rhetorical questions are weaknesses when the answers are not entirely clear and immediately suggested.

III.

SENTENCE STRUCTURE.

In the construction of sentences lies nine-tenths of all the difficulties of writing English—indeed, sentence structure is doubtless far more important in English than in any other language. First, grammatical relationship is in English almost wholly a matter of the arrangement of words. Then, emphasis is secured very largely by the arrangement of words in sentences. On sentence arrangement depend also euphony and rhythm to a considerable extent, and in the length and shortness of sentences, and the alternation of different sentence structures, we find the pleasing variety so characteristic of the English language.

Sentence structure is determined in the first place by grammatical and logical requirements. In taking up the subject of rhetoric we must assume that these requirements are fully understood.

ARRANGEMENT OF WORDS FOR CLEARNESS AND EMPHASIS.

The first rhetorical element to be considered is clearness, and the second, emphasis, as affected by arrangement. Custom has determined a fixed normal order in the arrangement of words in a sentence, and due consideration of this is necessary to clearness. Any deviation from the normal order tends to emphasize the displaced word. Deviation, however, must never result in lack of clearness.

1. The natural position of an adjective is before the noun it modifies. Says Earle, "Marked divergencies (from this order) arrest the attention, and have, by reason of their exceptional character, a force which may be converted into a useful rhetorical effect." And he adds that an inversion may be proper on occasion in "poetry or high style; and it is one of the traces which early French culture has left on our literature."

Example: "The crowd round a couple of dogs fighting is a crowd *masculine* mainly, with an occasional active, compassionate woman, fluttering wildly round the outside, and using her tongue and hands freely upon the men, as so many 'brutes;' it is a crowd *annular*, *compact*, and *mobile*; a crowd *centripetal*, having its eyes and its heads all bent downward and inwards, to one common focus."—*Dr. John Brown*.

An inversion of this kind makes the adjective much more important in interest than the noun it modifies.

- 2. The normal position of the article or the possessive pronoun is before the adjective, and no prepositional or participial phrases should be introduced between the article and the noun. Such phrases are occasionally so introduced, after the German usage; but the construction is very awkward, as may be seen in the following from Thackeray: "The, I believe of Eastern derivation, monosyllable 'Bosh'."
- 3. The normal place for the adverb is before the verb. Placing the adverb after the verb makes it emphatic.

Example: "He writes passionately because he feels keenly; forcibly, because he feels vividly."

4. The adverb *only* has equal significance before nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Hence,

unless it is placed immediately before the word it modifies it is likely to affect the meaning of some word with which it should not be connected.

Example: "He only went as far as Boston." (Evidently the meaning is, "He went only as far as Boston.")

If the reference is backward, *alone* is a better word in most cases than *only*, as in "I *only* am to blame;" better, "I *alone* am to blame."

5. A prepositional phrase, especially a genitive (or possessive) with of, should, if possible, immediately follow the word it modifies with no intervening word which may usurp the relationship.

Example: "The springs and sources were unsealed of modern ideas still to be developed." (Evidently the introduction of the verb were unsealed between the noun sources and the modifying phrase of modern ideas is very awkward, if not actually misleading.)

6. Hodgson in his Errors in the Use of English says, "What is to be thought of first is to be mentioned first, and things to be thought of together should be placed in close conjunction." This remark is especially applicable to adverbial phrases, which are liable to be misplaced so as to cause confusion and inaccuracy.

Examples: "He blew out his brains after bidding his wife good-by with a gun." (Evidently with a gun should be placed after brains.) Note that the object of a verb, such as brains, is more closely connected with the verb than a prepositional phrase. The most closely connected adverbial adjunct is placed nearest the verb, and the others follow in logical order. "The Board of Education has resolved

to erect a building large enough to accommodate 500 students three stories high."

"Such adverbs as at least, at all events, probably, perhaps, indeed, are often placed ambiguously between two emphatic elements of the sentence, where their influence may be reckoned either backward or forward."—Genung.

Example: "I think you will find my Latin exercise, at all events, as good as my cousin's." (Does this mean "my Latin exercise at all events," or "as good at all events"?)

7. Such conjunctions as *if*, *unless*, *though*, *that*, may extend their influence beyond the clause in which they stand into other clauses connected by *and*. Dependent clauses should, therefore, be carefully distinguished from principal, so that at no time shall the conjunction seem to apply to a clause intended to be principal.

Example: "He replied that he wished to help them, and intended to make arrangements accordingly." (Does this mean, "He replied and he intended," or "He replied that he wished and that he intended"?)

Especial care should be taken of a "that" clause within another of the same kind.

8. "A pronoun should be so placed as promptly and unmistakably to present its antecedent to the mind of the reader. If, in a given case, this cannot be done, either the sentence should be given another turn, or the noun that served for antecedent should be repeated."—Hill.

Example: Sentence from Smollett: "The pedant assured his patron that although he could not divest the boy of the knowledge he had already im-

bibed, unless he should empower him to disable his fingers, he should endeavor, with God's help, to prevent his future improvement."

Correction by Bain: "The pedant assured his patron that although he could not divest the boy of the knowledge already imbibed, unless he were empowered to disable the little trickster's fingers, he should endeavor, with God's help, to prevent his pupil's future improvement."

The difficulties that may arise with pronouns of all kinds, personal, relative, and demonstrative, are almost numberless. Each case presents a fresh problem, and the student must form the habit of weighing each pronoun as he comes to it.

9. The construction should not be changed in the same sentence without a most excellent reason, as the effect of such change is to confuse the mind of the reader.

Example: "We could see the lake over the woods, two or three miles ahead, and that the river made an abrupt turn southward."—Thoreau. (Better, "We could see the lake... and the river making an abrupt turn southward.")

10. Correspondent connectives, such as not only—but also; either—or; both—and; etc., should be placed next to the words they connect.

Example of error: "I neither estimated myself highly nor lowly."—Mill. (Should be, "I estimated myself neither highly nor lowly.")

11. After the conjunctions as and than the implied construction should be quite clear. It is sometimes necessary to repeat the verb to remove ambiguity.

Example: "Cardinal Richelieu hated Buck-

ingham as sincerely as the Spaniard Olivares."
(Does this mean, "as he hated the Spaniard Olivares" or "as the Spaniard Olivares hated Buckingham"?)

12. "In general, words in a sentence should be so arranged that the principal words shall stand clear and disentangled from any words that would clog them."—Blair.

"Observe the arrangement of the following sentences in Lord Shaftesbury's 'Advice to an Author.' He is speaking of modern poets as compared with ancient: 'If, whilst they profess only to please, they secretly advise and give instruction, they may now, perhaps, as well as formerly, be esteemed, with justice, the best and most honorable among authors.' This is a well-constructed sentence; it contains a great many circumstances and adverbs necessary to qualifying the meaning,—only, secretly, as well, perhaps, now, with justice, formerly; yet these are placed with so much art as neither to embarrass nor weaken the sentence; while that which is the capital object in it—namely, 'Poets being justly esteemed the best and most honorable among authors,'-comes out in the conclusion clear and detached, and possesses its proper place. See, now, what would be the effect of a different arrangement. Suppose him to have placed the members of the sentence thus: 'If whilst they profess to please only, they advise and give instruction secretly, they may be esteemed the best and most honorable among authors, with justice, perhaps, now as well as formerly.' Here we have precisely the same words and the same sense; but by means of the circumstances being so intermingled as to clog the capital words, the whole becomes perplexed, without grace and without strength."—Blair.

Barrett Wendell calls attention to the fact that the emphatic positions in a sentence are just before punctuation marks. The comma, semicolon, or period, indicates that we pause a moment upon the word just preceding, and thus it is *forced* upon our attention.

GROUPING OF PHRASES.

Says Professor Wendell (*English Composition*), "The principles of composition are three: The first, the principle of Unity, concerns the substance of a composition: every composition should group itself about one central idea. The second, the principle of Mass, concerns the external form of a composition: the chief parts of every composition should be so placed as readily to catch the eye. The third, the principle of Coherence, concerns the internal arrangement of a composition: the relation of each part of a composition to its neighbors should be unmistakable."

These general principles of composition do not apply very closely to the arrangement of words in phrases or clauses; but when it comes to the grouping of phrases and clauses in sentences, in so far as this is not a matter of grammatical relationship, they are paramount.

A rhetorically effective sentence must have but one idea. The loose union of two ideas in a sentence by means of and is a well-defined vice. The two parts of a legitimate compound sentence which are connected by and should be but two different phases of the same idea. The thought should not deviate from a straight line, as it were. Whatever helps it on, along the path selected, is legitimate, whatever is in the nature of a digression, entirely

leaving the line of thought, is distinctly illegitimate; and turnings and waverings even upon the line of thought are in all cases to be justified only by special reasons if permitted at all.

To the definition of Mass given by Professor Wendell, namely, that the most important parts of a sentence should be so placed as most readily to catch the idea, may be added another which takes the word in a decidedly broader sense. The phrases and clauses in a sentence should be so chosen and shaped in themselves as to give the different parts of the thought their just proportion. Ideas and parts of ideas must have relative importance in every composition. In one composition they are prominent and have great importance relatively; in another the same may be of slight importance. The words corresponding to them in each case must indicate this relative importance. This they may do in one of two ways, by bulk (or number) and by emphasis due to position. Not only must the most important parts of a sentence be so placed as readily to catch the eye, but we must phrase them so as to catch the ear and occupy the attention in a degree nicely proportioned to their relative value in the logical progression of the thought. This principle of Proportion becomes of more importance in the formation of paragraphs and entire compositions; but it is also a leading factor in sentence structure.

The principle of Coherence affects the logical relationship of the parts of a sentence. Its operation begins in the selection of words. Not only must the words chosen express in a general way the idea we have in mind, but they must express that idea in such a way as to fit nicely into the logical sequence.

Logical inexactness in progression from phrase to phrase is the vice of all inferior composition, and it proves most misleading. It is the cause of much wandering from the thought that ends in sloughs of rhetorical weakness. Coherence especially affects the grouping of phrases, indeed it should be the controlling factor in such grouping, taking rank even above Mass or Emphasis, if such a superiority could be imagined where both requirements are imperative.

Let us now consider some of the methods by which phrase grouping may be altered from the natural, grammatical sequence, and note the effect of such alteration.

The Periodic or Suspensive Structure.—A periodic sentence is one in which the essential elements of the sense are not perceived until the end. This suspense is usually affected by placing the subject nominative or the predicate verb at the end of the sentence. A sentence in which the essential part of the meaning is complete before the end is called a loose sentence. Any tendency to suspend perception of the meaning toward the end, if not entirely to the end of the sentence, is called periodic structure.

Example: "On whatever side we contemplate Homer, what principally strikes us is his wonderful invention." (Here *invention* is the all essential word, and it is reserved for the very end of the sentence. If we said, "Homer's wonderful invention is the principal thing that strikes us, on whatever side we contemplate his genius," we should have a loose sentence, since the essential parts of the meaning are completed with *strikes us*, the concluding clause being merely a matter of explanation. In general we have a loose sentence if we can place a

period at any point before the end and still have a sentence complete in itself.)

Among the ways of effecting suspension we may name the following:

1. A subordinate clause beginning with *if* or *when*, really adverbial and naturally following the main verb, may be placed at the beginning of a sentence and may contain the antecedent of a pronoun to be found as the subject of the principal clause.

Example: "If then the power of speech is a gift as great as any that can be named,—if the original of language is by many philosophers even considered divine, - if by means of words the secrets of the heart are brought to light, pain of soul is relieved, hidden grief is carried off, sympathy recovered, counsel imparted, experience recorded, and wisdom perpetuated,—if by great authors the many are drawn up into unity, national character is fixed, a people speaks, the past and the future, the East and the West are brought into communication with each other,—if such men are, in a word, the spokesmen and prophets of the human family,—it will not answer to make light of Literature or to neglect its study; rather we may be sure that, in proportion as we master it in whatever language, and imbibe its spirit, we shall ourselves become in our own measure the ministers of like benefits to others, be they many or few, be they in the obscurer or the more distinguished walks of life,—who are united to us by social ties, and are within the sphere of our personal influence."—Cardinal Newman.

2. An adverbial phrase or a succession of adverbial phrases may be placed at the beginning in

such a manner as to suspend the meaning until the close, so accumulating the force of attention upon it.

Example: "From the pompous and theatrical scaffolds of Egmont and Horn, to the nineteen halters prepared by Master Karl, to hang up the chief bakers and brewers of Brussels on their own thresholds—from the beheading of the twenty nobles on the Horse-market, in the opening of the governor's career, to the roasting alive of the Uitenhoove at its close—from the block on which fell the honored head of Antony Straalen, to the obscure chair in which the ancient gentlewoman of Amsterdam suffered death for an act of vicarious mercy—from one year's end to another's—from the most signal to the most squalid scenes of sacrifice, the eye and the hand of the great master directed, without weariness, the task imposed by the sovereign."—Motley.

3. A participle or adjective modifying the subject may be the means of suspense. This is, however, liable to abuse. A participle should never be used without a clear reference to the word which would be the subject of the verb if the participial form were not used.

Example of error: Being exceedingly fond of birds, an aviary is always to be found in the grounds. (Here being is used absolutely, some personal pronoun being implied as its subject. The sentence should be recast so that being may modify the subject of the principal verb, or else the participial clause should be changed. We might say, "As I am fond, an aviary is always to be found," or "Being fond, I always keep an aviary."

The periodic structure is distinctly more formal and more difficult for the reader than the loose or

natural arrangement, and is to be used with caution and great moderation. In familiar business and social business letter-writing we seldom have occasion to use it. It is, however, often effective in more formal writing, such as that for an address.

EXPANSION AND CONDENSATION.

For purposes of proportioning the phrases and clauses in a sentence, or for directing the emphasis, various means of expansion and condensation must be employed.

Expansion. 1. The addition of prefacing expressions, such as the anticipative there and it, aid

in directing the emphasis.

Examples: "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves." (Note how much better the emphasis is directed than if we were to say, "A lad here hath five barley loaves.") "Would you believe that it was she who did it?" (Better than "Would you believe she did it"?)

2. Such phrases as "Let me remind the reader," etc., serve to amplify the statement and accumulate emphasis on some special point.

3. Every detail in a series may be emphasized

by repeating the conjunction usually implied.

Example: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God."

4. Amplifying clauses may be added in the

middle of a sentence.

The particular methods and places must be learned by instinct from the study of standard authors, or the writer may judge for himself.

Example: Cardinal Newman says, "And, since the thoughts and reasonings of an author have, as I have said, a personal character, no wonder that his style is not only the image of his subject, but of his mind. That pomp of language, that full and tuneful diction, that felicitousness in the choice and exquisiteness in the collocation of words, which to prosaic writers seem artificial, is nothing else but the mere habit and way of a lofty intellect. Aristotle, in his sketch of the magnanimous man, tells us that his voice is deep, his motions slow, and his stature commanding. In like manner, the elocution of a great intellect is great. His language expresses, not his great thoughts only, but his great self. Certainly he might use fewer words than he uses; but he fertilizes his simplest ideas, and germinates into a multitude of details, and prolongs the march of his sentences, and sweeps round to the full diapason of his harmony, as if kudei gaion, rejoicing in his own vigor and richness of resource. I say, a narrow critic will call it verbiage, when really it is a sort of fulness of heart, parallel to that which makes the merry boy whistle as he walks, or the young man, like the smith in the novel, flourish his club when there is no one to fight with."

Condensation.—We have already noted that figures of speech nearly always tend to condensation. There are more simple means, however.

1. For strength, omit modifiers and depend on the noun and verb. Example:

"His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, This was a man!"

-Shakspere.

(How much more forcible is the condensed expression, "This was a man," than would have been a full catalogue of adjectives giving all his virtues! Yet such a phrase would have had force only after such an introduction as Shakspere gave it.)

2. Condensation is effected by making subor-

dinate clauses principal.

Example: "The wind passeth over it, and it is gone." (This is stronger than the full and natural expression which would place the first clause in a subordinate relationship with as soon as or the like.)

. 3. Ellipsis is often possible and aids condensa-

tion.

Example: Thackeray, writing of George IV, says, "On Wednesday he was very affectionate with that wretched Brummel, and on Thursday forgot him; * cheated him even out of a snuff-box which he owed the poor dandy; * saw him years afterward in his downfall and poverty, when the bankrupt Beau sent him another snuff-box with some of the snuff * he used to love, as a piteous token of remembrance and submission; and the king took the snuff, and ordered his horses and drove on, and had not the grace to notice his old companion, favorite, rival, enemy, superior." (Words are omitted at the points indicated by the asterisks.)

Expansion becomes a fault when it results in redundancy, or the addition of details already implied.

Circumlocution, or the deliberate choice of a roundabout method of expressing a thought, is justified when it is desired to soften the words, or for any similar purpose. It may also be justifiably employed for humorous effect. As a rule, however, it is a fault to be avoided.

REPETITION AND THE BALANCED STRUCTURE.

Strength and emphasis are often gained by the deliberate repetition of a word which the writer desires to impress strongly upon the mind of the reader. The repetition of a method of phrasing is called the balanced structure, and has much the same effect that the repetition of a single word has.

Repetition is also sometimes required for clearness, as when we summarize a number of details forming the subject of a verb just before we introduce the verb itself.

Examples of repetition and of the balanced structure used for rhetorical effect are to be found on almost every page of Macaulay.

"But what then? Can you remove that distrust? That it exists cannot be denied. That it is an evil cannot be denied. That it is an increasing evil cannot be denied."

"Now, therefore, while everything at home and abroad forebodes ruin to those who persist in a hopeless struggle against the spirit of the age; now, while the crash of the proudest throne of the continent is still resounding in our ears; now, while the roof of a British palace affords ignominious shelter to the exiled heir of forty kings; now, while we see on every side ancient institutions subverted, and great societies dissolved; now, while the heart of England is still sound; now, while old feelings and old associations retain a power and a charm which may too soon pass away; now, in this your accepted time, now, in this your day of salvation, take counsel, not of prejudice, not of party spirit, not of the ignominious pride of a fatal consistency, but of history, of reason, of the ages which are past, of the signs of this most portentous time."

(Not only do we find words repeated here, as for example *now*, but the phrase structure is repeated in a great variety of ways, as if the author piled argument upon argument.)

The repetition of the same thought in different words is known as the fault of tautology. Repetition should add to the thought in some way if it is to be a real force in language.

EUPHONY AND RHYTHM.

The laws governing euphony and rhythm in prose are hardly to be put into definite rules. The ear and the good sense of the writer must be the guide.

It may be said, however, that prose has a rhythm quite as much as poetry has; but it differs from that of poetry in that it is never measured, and is constantly varied. When it becomes a monotonous chant, rhythm in prose is a distinct fault.

All prose should be subjected to the test of being read aloud. If when so read it glides along in a pleasing flow, it has a proper prose rhythm; if it sounds "sing-songy," it is bad.

The test of reading aloud will also determine the harmony and naturalness of the sounds of the words and letters in their succession. This harmony is called *euphony*. For the sake of euphony we avoid groups of harsh consonants not easily pronounced.

Alliteration, or the repetition of some consonant in succeeding words, and assonance, or the repetition of a vowel sound in succeeding words, are in effect figures of speech which may prove very useful in prose as well as in poetry. Thus in Ruskin's "long level lines" the repetition of the l seems to suggest the thought in the very sound.

IV.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSITION.

So far we have merely considered details in connection with the choice of words and their arrangement in sentences for the purposes of composition. The next question which presents itself is, What standard or guide should we adopt for applying the knowledge we have acquired?

First of all we may remind the student of what has been said in connection with the choice of words, that everything that is written should be executed with the needs of the reader in mind. Composition is exclusively for the reader. Unless we understand him, the working of his mind, the requirements of his nature, his stock of information, his fund of intelligence, we must inevitably be correspondingly ineffective in our composition.

Professor Adams S. Hill, of Harvard, gives us the following rule or standard for testing our work:

"To the efficiency of communication by language four things are necessary: Grammatical Purity (or Correctness),—the use of those expressions and those only which are accepted by the consentient practice of the speakers or writers of the present time who enjoy the best national reputation; Clearness (or Perspicuity),—the quality in style by which the meaning is conveyed to the person addressed, in appropriate words, as few as are compatible with completeness of statement, and arranged as nearly in the order of the thought as the language permits; Force,—the quality that selects the most effective expressions and arranges them in the most effective manner; and Elegance (or Beauty),—conformity of good taste.

"While engaged in the act of composition, a writer should think little about Force, and not at all about positive Elegance; but he should constantly aim to make himself intelligible, sure that if he does not succeed in doing this, other merits will be of little avail, and that if he does succeed, other merits will be likely to come unsought. To this end, he should obtain as extensive a command of the language as possible."

The fundamental principles of composition have been variously and eloquently stated by many authors, and we cannot do better than quote their words.

Says John Quincy Adams in his Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory:

"When discoursing in public, let your choice of words be neither tainted with indelicacy, nor tarnished with affectation. Let your words bear the express image of your thought, and transmit it complete to your hearer's mind. You need then give yourself very little concern to inquire for the parish register of its nativity. Whether new or old, whether of Saxon or Grecian parentage, it will perform its duties to your satisfaction, without at all impairing your reputation for purity of speech."

Locke says:

"My lord, the new way of ideas, and the old way of speaking intelligibly, was always, and ever will be, the same. And if I may take the liberty to declare my sense of it, herein it consists:

(1) That a man uses no words but such as he makes the signs of certain determined objects of his mind in thinking, which he can make known to another. (2) Next that he uses the same word steadily for the sign of the same immediate object of his mind in thinking. (3) That he join those words together in prepositions, according to the grammatical rules of that language he speaks in. (4) That he unite those sentences in a coherent discourse."

The following is from Cardinal Newman:

"A great author is not one who merely has a copia verborum, whether in prose or verse, and can, as it were, turn on at his will any number of splendid phrases and swelling sentences; but he is one who has something to say and knows how to say it.

* * He writes passionately, because he feels keenly; forcibly, because he conceives vividly; he can analyze his subject, and therefore he is rich; he embraces it as a whole and in its parts, and therefore he is consistent; he has a firm hold of it, and therefore he is luminous. When his imagination wells up, it overflows in ornament; when his heart is touched, it thrills along his verse. He always has the right word for the

right idea, and never a word too much. If he is brief, it is because few words suffice; if he is lavish of them, still each word has its mark, and aids, not embarrasses, the vigorous march of his elecution."

"Emerson teaches a sounder doctrine in giving the 'essential caution to young writers that they shall not in their discourse leave out the one thing which the discourse was written to say,' but shall each 'obey' his 'native bias.' 'To each his own methods, style, wit, cloquence.'"

Arlo Bates in his second series of *Talks on Writing English* has the following interesting remarks:

"He who desires to write effectively must cultivate the power of writing passionately. It may sound a little absurd to say that even exercises are to be written with passion, yet nothing less than this will do. Of course here passion means, as it does in Milton's definition of poetry, any feeling, great or small, which for the time being absorbs the consciousness. is necessary to practice putting on paper those thoughts which we all speak of as 'taking us out of ourselves,'-perhaps meaning thereby making us for the rare moment really know ourselves! —those emotions which take complete possession of us. reading we are all conscious at times of being warmed or thrilled. The aim of the student of the art of composition should be to write so that his reader shall feel heart beat and cheek glow. We all have times when we feel stingingly the nobility of life, its joy, or its pain; we are artists when we have conquered the art of conveying that feeling to a reader. The half-trained man, as a rule, fails most signally just when he feels what he writes most keenly. It is important to cultivate the power of commanding technique in states of high emotional excitement. What is needed is to develop the artistic sense, the double consciousness that feels and at the same time embodies the emotion

"A word of caution must be added here. To write with passion does not mean to gush. Nothing could be worse than to fall into extravagances supposing them to be fine. The test of the genuineness of what is written is that it rather falls short of what is genuinely felt. Morbid confessions and hysterical self-examinations, with all other sentimentalities, should be shunned religiously. The abomination of desolation spoken by Jeremy the prophet is cheerful compared with sloppiness and mooniness. The young woman who is traditionally supposed to devour chalk and slate pencils in order to become pale and interesting is the physical counterpart of the writer who indulges in covering

his paper with the things which he thinks that it would have been fine to feel. The word should be kept within the bounds of the realized emotion. The feeling may be imaginary, but it must be sincerely felt. When I say that the student should write with passion, I mean that he is to be bold in trying to express any emotion really experienced; he is to have simply and frankly the courage of his emotions, and this in itself will protect him from the temptation to set down sham sentiment."

Ruskin gives us the standard for a higher and more passionate type of composition in these words:

"Remember always, you have two characters in which all greatness of art consists:—First, the earnest and intense seizing of natural facts; then the ordering those facts by strength of human intellect, so as to make them, for all who look upon them, to the utmost scrviceable, memorable, and beautiful. thus great art is nothing else than the type of strong and noble life; for, as the ignoble person, in his dealings with all that occurs in the world about him, first sees nothing clearly,—looks nothing fairly in the face, and then allows himself to be swept away by the trampling torrent, and unescapable force, of the things he would not foresee, and could not understand: so the noble person, looking the facts of the world full in the face, and fathoming them with deep faculty, then deals with them in unalarmed intelligence and unhurried strength, and becomes, with his human intellect and will, no unconscious nor insignificant agent, in consummating their good, and restraining their evil."

CONSTRUCTIVE COMPOSITION.

The Paragraph.—We may begin our study of constructive composition with the paragraph. Here Professor Wendell's three principles of Unity, Mass, and Coherence are almost completely dominant. A paragraph ordinarily begins with a sentence stating some fact or observation or principle, and ends with a sentence containing the conclusion to which that fact or observation or principle leads.

A paragraph should deal with but one division of the subject. This is an application of the principle of Unity.

A paragraph should be so arranged and proportioned as to give the ideas presented their true relationship to the whole discussion, description, or narrative. This is an application of the principle of Mass.

A paragraph should consist of sentences which follow each other in a logical and natural order, with no violent breaks or turns. This is an application of the principle of Coherence.

Numberless illustrations will be afforded by the succeeding analysis.

Kinds of Composition.—Compositions are classified according to the nature of the thought, as follows: Narrative, or the simple relating of a series of events or incidents; Description, or picturing in words; Exposition, or explanation or analysis of the details of a subject.

To these might be added Argumentation or Demonstration and Persuasion, types used in debate and oratory.

Dialogue is the name given to reproduction of the words of characters, real or imaginary; but a composition containing dialogue is none the less on that account narration or description, and may on occasion be exposition, as in the dialogues of Plato.

The manner of treatment from the point of view of thought also gives rise to various kinds of composition, such as the *Humorous*, or composition which derives its chief interest from its appeal to the reader's sense of the ridiculous; the *Rhetorical*, or composition which is somewhat formal in style, employing the artificial devices of rhetoric (as, for instance, oratory); the *Dramatic*, or composition which deals with the current of human life. These may also be merely qualities of any composition, being united with each other or with plain, direct statement, in varying degree for a variety of effects.

Prose may also be classified as *Essay* (a form of exposition in which humor and other devices may be used in a varied appeal to the intellect, the emotions, and the sense of beauty); *Fiction*, or imaginative presentation of human figures, a kind of writing in which the dramatic is nearly always a leading quality; and *Drama*, which is similar in subject to fiction, but is written exclusively in dialogue for presentation on the stage.

Point of View.—An essential matter in the construction of any entire composition, and one of the first to receive attention, is the point of view. The point of view cannot be changed frequently without resulting in confusion. In his Talks on Writing English, Arlo Bates has some admirable remarks on this subject:—

"The point of view is a matter of so much importance and a matter at the same time so scantily discussed by writers on composition, that despite the fact that I have written of it at some length already, it seems to me to deserve further consideration. The violations of this principle are so common and so easy that a writer should bear it in mind not only when he begins revision, but at every stage of his progress. That a work shall be well started is not enough; that it is given at the outset a definite and clear point of view is much, but care should be taken to see that the selected point of view is strictly held to throughout.

"To maintain the point of view is the common honesty of composition; yet the ordinary writer seems to find it as difficult to do this as the sinner to live up to the traditional New Year's resolutions. The man who searches the ceiling for things to put on paper, instead of trying sincerely to set down what he thinks, is sure to collect ideas which are incongruous. Only when the writer is really in earnest, only when the mind is absorbed in the work, is the point of view likely to be naturally consistent throughout. The writer who is wrapped up in saying exactly what he thinks and feels is generally kept consistent by his personality and his earnestness.

'The Point of View is the attitude of the reader towards the subject of a composition. This should be determined beforehand by the author, and explicitly or implicitly indicated at the very beginning.

* * * * * *

"The writer who does not at the outset give the reader the point of view is like an untrained actor. The amateur is constantly unconscious that he is assuming an attitude, while the professional knows what he is doing and counts upon it real actor learns that he is producing some impression or other all the time that he is in sight of the audience; the amateur is apt to be naïvely unaware that he has any effect except when he has some special thing to do or to say. The accomplished writer is entirely conscious that from the first word he writes he is making upon the mind of his reader some kind of an impression; the untrained goes innocently on until absolutely obliged explicitly to state what is the mood desired. The artist realizes the fact that the reader must at the very beginning infer some sort of a point of view, and that if left to himself he may hit upon the point of view which the author intended, but is equally likely to get instead the one most incompatible or undesirable."

NARRATION.

As illustration is better than abstract definition, we offer the following as an admirable example of simple narration, which is none the less narrative because purely imaginary and highly figurative, and none the less simple because so complex rhetorically.

Note especially the paragraph structure, how each paragraph marks a distinct division of the subject. The first paragraph tells us what the leaf was "heard to sigh and cry;" the second deals with the colloquy between the twig and the tree in regard to the leaf's anxiety; (the second paragraph deftly implies the return of the thought to the leaf itself;) and the third describes the leaf's condition in consequence of what was said in the second paragraph.

Let the student trace each paragraph in the same way, and note how uniformly one paragraph is devoted to one thought, and how each fits logically and easily into the one that precedes and the one that follows; while the last paragraph comes back to the thought in the first, and we have the conclusion of the whole subject that was suggested in the first paragraph.

THE ANXIOUS LEAF.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Once upon a time a little leaf was heard to sigh and cry, as leaves often do when a gentle breeze is about. And the twig said, "What is the matter, little leaf?" And the leaf said, "The wind just told me that one day it would pull me off and throw me down on the ground to die."

The twig told this to the branch on which it grew, and the branch told it to the tree. And when the tree heard the plaintive murmur, it rustled all over, and sent back word to the leaf, "Do not be afraid; hold on tightly, and you shall not go until you want to."

And so the leaf stopped sighing, but went on nestling and

singing. Every time the tree shook itself and stirred up its leaves, the branches shook themselves, the little twig shook itself, and the little leaf danced up and down merrily as if nothing could pull it off. And so it grow all summer long until October.

And when the bright days of autumn came the little leaf saw all the leaves around becoming very beautiful. Some were yellow, and some were scarlet, and some were striped with both colors.

Then the leaf asked the tree what this meant. And the tree said, "All these leaves are getting ready to fly away, and they

have put on their beautiful colors because of joy."

Then the little leaf began to want to go, too, and grew very beautiful in thinking of it; and when it was very gay in color, it saw that the branches of the tree had no color in them, and so the leaf said, "Oh, branches! Why are you lead-color and we golden?"

"We must keep on our work clothes, for our task is not done; but your clothes are for holiday, because your work is finished."

Just then a little puff of wind came. The leaf let go without thinking, and the wind took it up and turned it over and over, and whirled it like a spark of fire in the air; then it fell gently down under the edge of the fence among hundreds of other leaves, and fell into a dream, and never waked up to tell what it dreamt about.

The majority of sentences in this selection begin with the conjunction and used in a semi-adverbial sense. Undoubtedly the use is entirely justified in this composition by the peculiar effect produced, which could be produced in no other way

However, the frequent use of and in this way is often a serious fault, concerning which Arlo Bates has this to say:

"The placing of a conjunction with the force of an independent adverb at the beginning of a sentence, or even at the beginning of a paragraph, is exceedingly common with all careless writers. No schoolboy composition is likely to be without instances. The work of writers of distinction affords abundant precedent, yet the construction is more often a fault than a virtue; and it is probably, even in the style of good writers, more often a carelessness or a habit than a deliberate effect. Of modern authors of recognized merit perhaps the most marked instance is Stevenson. With him it is a mannerism which seems to

be due to nervousness; and personally I must confess that I find his continual introductory 'ands' and 'buts' not unlike the wearisome and teasing burr which accompanies the utterance of a telephone. In four pages of the essay called *Some College Memories* are eleven sentences and one paragraph beginning with 'and' or 'but.' Here is a bit from that otherwise charming essay which illustrates the effect:

"To-day, again, they have Professor Buteher, and I hear he has a prodigious deal of Greek; and they have Professor Chrystal, who is a man filled with mathematies. And doubtless these are set-offs. But they cannot change the fact that Pro-

fessor Blackie has retired.'

"This is not admirable, even when done by Stevenson. More is needed to give ease to style than promiseuous conjunctions at the beginning of sentences, and students who without difficulty copy this mannerism are as few as ever from the qualities which give charm to the work of genius. In the diction of the Bible 'and' is used as an independent adverb, so that 'And it came to pass' has the same grammatical value, and practically the same meaning, as 'Now it came to pass.' This usage may be urged in defense of the adverbial use of 'and,' perhaps even to a less degree of the use of 'but.' The conclusion of the whole matter is that while a writer may find authority in precedent for starting a sentence with 'and' or 'but,' he follows it with the sacrifice of what Emerson calls 'superb propriety.'"

EXERCISE.

Rewrite the story of *The Anxious Leaf*, changing all the "and" constructions to the ordinary form, and note the effect.

DESCRIPTION.

Scott was a master of description, and it is that which makes the success of his novels. They are a vast pageantry, skilfully arranged as a changing panorama. A sense for what will make a good picture, or an intuition for the "picturesque," is the only guide for the descriptive writer.

A famous description is the following from Ivanhoe:

"The fire was spreading rapidly through all parts of the castle, when Ulrica, who had first kindled it, appeared on a turret, in the guise of one of the ancient furies, yelling forth a war-song, such as was of yore raised on the field of battle by the scalds of the yet heathen Saxons. Her long dishevelled gray hair flew back from her uncovered head; the inebriating delight of gratified vengcance contended in her eyes with the fire of insanity; and she brandished the distaff which she held in her hand, as if she had been one of the Fatal Sisters, who spin and abridge the thread of human life.

* * * * * *

"The towering flames had now surmounted every obstruction, and rose to the evening skics one huge and burning beacon, seen far and wide through the adjacent country. Tower after tower crashed down, with blazing roof and rafter; and the combatants were driven from the court-yard. The vanquished, of whom very few remained, scattered and escaped into the neighboring wood. The victors, assembled in large bands, gazed with wonder, not unmixed with fear, upon the flames, in which their own ranks and arms glanced duskly red. The maniac figure of the Saxon, Ulrica, was for a long time visible on the lofty stand she had chosen, tossing her arms abroad with wild exultation, as if she reigned empress of the conflagration which she had raised. At length, with a terrific crash, the whole turret gave way, and she perished in the flames which had consumed her tyrant."

Exercises.

Describe some incident at a fire which you have seen, and do it in as short a space as Scott has done in this instance.

Find in Scott three other word-pictures as short and as strong as this.

Compare with Scott's description the following from Charles Dickens. This is quite a different sort of description, far less simple and direct. Is it as telling? Is it as vivid? Dickens was a master of language; but he was liable to fall into the vice of an overwrought style, something akin to what has already been described as "fine writing."

· A WILD NIGHT AT SEA.

By CHARLES DICKENS.

On, on, on, over the countless miles of angry space, roll the long heaving billows. Mountains and eaves are here, and yet are not; for what is now the one is now the other; then all is but a boiling heap of rushing water. Pursuit and flight and mad return of wave on wave, and savage struggling, ending in a spouting up of foam which whitens the black night; incessant change of place and form and hue; constancy in nothing but eternal strife: on, on, on they roll, and darker grows the night, and louder howls the wind, and more elamorous and fierce become the million voices in the sea; when the wild cry goes forth upon the storm, "A Ship!"

Onward she comes, in gallant combat with the elements, her tall mast trembling, and her timbers starting on the strain: onward she comes, now high upon the curling billows, now low down in the hollows of the sea, as if hiding for the moment from its fury, and every storm voice in the air and water cries more loudly yet, "A Ship!" Still she comes striving on; and at her boldness and the spreading cry the angry waves rise up above each other's hoary heads to look; and round about the vessel as far as the mariners on her decks can pierce into the gloom, they press upon her, forcing each other down, and starting up and rushing forward from afar, in dreadful curiosity.

High over her they break, and round her surge and roar, and giving place to others, moaningly depart, and dash themselves to fragments in their baffied anger; still she comes onward bravely. And though the eager multitude crowd thick and fast upon her all the night, and dawn of day dissevers the untiring train yet bearing down upon the ship in an eternity of troubled waters, onward she comes, with dim lights burning in her hull, and people there, asleep, as if no deadly element were peering in at every seam and chink, and no drowned seaman's grave, with but a plank to cover it, were yawning in the unfathomable depths below.

EXERCISE.

Rewrite this description as nearly as possible in the simple descriptive style of Scott.

The following extract from Cooper's novel *The Prairie*, affords us an example of description mingled

with narration. The description, or picture effect, predominates, but the things said and done partake of narrative.

In this, too, we see the effect of dialogue as it is introduced into fictitious writing. In the description of persons, and the narration of events in which they are concerned, nothing is more natural, either in the description or the narration, than to tell what they said, and tell it in their own words.

Note that in fiction dialogue does not imply a verbatim report of conversation. We have a remark here and another there. The slight selections aid in the description and enliven the narrative.

THE PRAIRIE ON FIRE.

By James Fenimore Cooper.

The sleep of the fugitives lasted for several hours. The trapper was the first to shake off its influence, as he had been the last to court its refreshment. Rising, just as the gray light of day began to brighten that portion of the studded vault which rested on the eastern margin of the plain, he summoned his companions from their lairs, and pointed out the necessity of being once more on the alert.

"See, Middleton," exclaimed Inez, in a sudden burst of youthful pleasure that caused her for a moment to forget her situation, "how lovely is that sky! Surely it contains a promise of happier times."

"It is glorious," returned her husband. "Glorious and heavenly is that streak of vivid red, and here is a still brighter

crimson; rarely have I seen a richer rising of the sun."

"Rising of the sun," slowly repeated the old man, lifting his tall person from its seat with a deliberate and abstracted air, while he kept his eye riveted on the changing and certainly beautiful tints that were garnishing the vault of heaven. "Rising of the sun! I like not such risings of the sun. Ah's me! The imps have circumvented us with a vengeance. The prairie is on fire."

"God in heaven protect us!" cried Middleton, catching Inez to his bosom, under the instant impression of the imminence of their danger. "There is not time to lose, old man; each instant

is a day. Let us fly!"

"Whither," demanded the trapper, motioning him with calmness and dignity to arrest his steps. "In this wilderness of grass and reeds you are like a vessel in a broad lake without a compass. A single step on the wrong course might prove the destruction of us all. It is seldom danger is so pressing that there is not time enough for reason to do its work, young officer. Therefore, let us await its biddings."

"For my part," said Paul Hover, looking about him with no unequivocal expression of concern, "I acknowledge that should this dry bed of weeds get fairly in a flame, a bee would have to make a flight higher than common to prevent his wings from scorching. Therefore, old trapper, I agree with the captain, and

say, mount and run!"

"Ye are wrong, ye are wrong. Man is not a beast to follow the gift of instinct, and to snuff up his knowledge by a taint in the air or a rumbling in the sound; but he must see and reason and then conclude. So, follow me a little to the left, where there is a rising in the ground, whence we may make our reconnoiterings."

The old man waved his hand with authority, and led the way without further parlance to the spot he had indicated, followed by the whole of his alarmed companions. An eye less practiced than that of a trapper might have failed in discovering the gentle elevation to which he alluded, and which looked on the surface of

the meadow like a growth a little taller than common.

When they reached the place, however, the stinted grass itself announced the absence of that moisture which had fed the rank weeds of most of the plain, and furnished a clew to the evidence by which he had judged of the formation of the ground hidden beneath. Here a few minutes were lost in breaking down the tops of the surrounding herbage,—which, notwithstanding the advantage of their position, rose even above the heads of Middleton and Paul,—and in obtaining a lookout that might command a view of the surrounding sea of fire.

The examination which his companions so instantly and so intently made rather served to assure them of their desperate situation than to appease their fears. Huge columns of smoke were rolling up from the plain, and thickening in gloomy masses around the horizon. The red glow which gleamed upon the enormous folds, now lighting their volumes with the glare of the conflagration, now flashed to another point, as the flames beneath glided ahead, leaving all behind enveloped in awful darkness, and proclaiming louder than words the character of the imminent and rapidly approaching danger.

"This is terrible," exclaimed Middleton, folding the trembling Inez to his heart. "At such a time as this and in such a

manner."

"The gates of heaven are open to all who truly believe,"

murmured the pious devotee in his bosom.

"This resignation is maddening! But we are men and will make a struggle for our lives. How now, my brave and spirited friend, shall we yet mount and push across the flames, or shall we stand here and see those we most love perish in this frightful manner without an effort?"

"I am for a swarming time and a flight before the hive is too hot to hold us," said the bee-hunter, to whom it will be at once seen that the half-distracted Middleton addressed himself. "Come, old trapper, you must acknowledge this is but a slow way of getting out of danger. If we tarry here much longer it will be in the fashion that the bees lie around the straw after the hive has been smoked for its honey. You may hear the fire begin to roar already; and I know by experience that when the flames once get fairly into the prairie grass it is no sloth that can outrun it."

"Think you," returned the old man, pointing scornfully at the mazes of the dry and matted grass which environed them, "that mortal feet can outstrip the speed of fire on such a path?"

"What say you, friend doctor," cried the bewildered Paul, turning to the naturalist, with that sort of helplessness with which the strong are apt to seek aid of the weak, when human power is baffled by the hand of a mightier Being, "what say you? Have you no advice to give away in a case of life and death?"

The naturalist stood, tablets in hand, looking at the awful spectacle with as much composure as though the conflagration had been lighted in order to solve the difficulties of some scientific problem. Aroused by the question of his companion, he turned to his equally calm, though differently occupied, associate, the trapper, demanding with the most provoking insensibility to the urgent nature of their situation: "Venerable hunter, you have often witnessed similar prismatic experiments—"

He was rudely interrupted by Paul, who struck the tablets from his hands with a violence that betrayed the utter intellectual confusion which had overset the equanimity of his mind. Before time was allowed for remonstrance, the old man, who had continued during the whole scene like one much at a loss how to proceed, though, also, like one who was rather perplexed than alarmed, suddenly assumed a decided air as if he no longer doubted on the course it was most advisable to pursue.

"It is time to be doing," he said, interrupting the controversy that was about to ensue between the naturalist and the bee hunter; "it is time to leave off books and moanings, and to be

doing."

"You have eome to your recollections too late, miserable old man!" cried Middleton; "the flames are within a quarter of a mile of us and the wind is bringing them down in this quarter with dreadful rapidity."

"Anan! the flames! I care but little for the flames. If I only knew how to circumvent the cunning of the Tetons as I know how to cheat the fire of its prey, there would be nothing needed but the thanks to the Lord for our deliverance. Do you call this a fire? If you had seen what I have witnessed in the Eastern hills, when mighty mountains were like the furnaee of a smith, you would have known what it was to fear the flames, and to be thankful that you were spared. Come, lads, come; 'tis time to be doing now and to cease talking, for yonder curling flame is truly coming on like a trotting moose. Put hands upon this short and withered grass where we stand, and lay bare the earth."

"Would you think to deprive the fire of its vietims in this childish manner?" exclaimed Middleton.

A faint but solemn smile passed over the features of the old man, as he answered: "Your gran'ther would have said that when the enemy was nigh, a soldier could do no better than to obey."

The captain felt the reproof, and instantly began to imitate the industry of Paul, who was tearing the decayed herbage from the ground in a sort of desperate compliance with the trapper's direction. Even Ellen lent her hands to the labor, nor was it long before Inez was seen similarly employed, though none among them knew why or wherefore. When life is thought to be the reward of labor men are wont to be industrious. A very few moments sufficed to lay bare a spot of some twenty feet in diameter.

Into one edge of this little area the trapper brought the females, directing Middleton and Paul to cover their light and inflammable dresses with the blankets of the party. So soon as this preeaution was observed, the old man approached the opposite side of the grass, which still environed them in a tall and dangerous eirele, and selecting a handful of the dryest of the herbage, he placed it over the pan of his rifle. The light combustible kindled at the flash. Then he placed the little flame into a bed of standing bog, and, withdrawing from the spot to the center of the ring, he patiently awaited the result.

The subtle element seized with avidity upon its new fuel, and in a moment forked flames were gliding among the grass, as the tongues of ruminating animals are seen rolling among their food, apparently in quest of its sweetest portions. "Now," said the old man, holding up a finger, and laughing in his peculiarly silent manner, "you shall see fire fight fire! Ah's me! many is the time I have burnt a smooth path from wanton laziness to pick my way across a tangled bottom."

"But is this not fatal?" cried the amazed Middleton. "Are you not bringing the enemy nigher to us instead of avoiding it?"

"Do you scorch so easily? Your gran'ther had a tougher skin. But we shall live to see; we shall all live to see."

The experience of the trapper was in the right. After the firc gained strength and heat it began to spread on three sides, dying of itself on the fourth for want of aliment. As it increased, and the sullen roaring announced its power, it cleared everything before it, leaving the black and smoking soil far more naked than if the scythe had swept the place. The situation of the fugitives would have still been hazardous had not the area enlarged as the fire encircled them. But by advancing to the spot where the trapper had kindled the grass they avoided the heat; and in a very few moments the flames began to recede in every quarter, leaving them enveloped in a cloud of smoke, but perfectly safe from the torrent of fire that was still furiously rolling onward.

The spectators regarded the simple expedient of the trapper with that species of wonder with which the courtiers of Ferdinand are said to have viewed the manner in which Columbus made his egg stand on its end, though with feelings that were filled with gratitude instead of envy.

"Most wonderful!" said Middleton, when he saw the complete success of the means by which they had been rescued from a danger that he had conceived to be unavoidable. "The thought was a gift from heaven, and the hand that executed it should be immortal."

"Old trapper," said Paul, thrusting his fingers through his shaggy locks, "I have lined many a loaded bee into his hole, and know something of the nature of the woods, but this is robbing a hornet of his sting without touching the insect."

"It will do, it will do," returned the old man, who, after the first moment of his success, seemed to think no more of the exploit. "Let the flames do their work for a short half-hour, and then we will mount. That time is needed to cool the meadow, for these unshod beasts are tender on the hoof as a barefooted girl."

The veteran on whose experience they all so implicitly relied for protection, employed himself in reconnoitering objects in the distance through the openings which the air occasionally made in the immense bodies of smoke that, by this time, lay in enormous piles on every part of the plain.

EXERCISES.

Note any faults of style in this selection from Cooper.

Rewrite the description, omitting all dialogue, and note the loss in vividness.

Rewrite the selection exclusively in dialogue, as would be necessitated in dramatic presentation on the stage. Note the narrowing of the field necessitated by this deliberate limitation.

EXPOSITION.

One of our most simple and natural writers is Benjamin Franklin, whose *Autobiography* is one of the most interesting narratives and commentaries in our language.

The following is an illustration of simple exposition. The passage begins with a short, condensed narrative, of the kind known as *anecdote*; but this narrative is not given for its value as a narrative, but rather for its illustrative effect in explaining an abstract idea.

Exposition, in so far as it is artistic in style, must be filled with illustrations of various kinds. Sometimes these illustrations are mere comparisons, sometimes they are elaborate figures of speech. In the majority of cases they bear upon the definition of words. We also note that all the devices of rhetoric for adding force and life are called forth by exposition, since otherwise it is likely to be dry explanation utterly devoid of literary merit.

THE WHISTLE.

By Benjamin Franklin.

When I was a child of seven years old, my friends, on a holiday, filled my pockets with coppers. I went directly to a shop

where they sold toys for children, and being charmed with the sound of a whistle, that I met by the way, in the hands of another boy, I voluntarily offered to give all my money for one. I then eame home and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my whistle, but disturbing all the family. My brothers, and sisters, and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth; put me in mind what good things I might have bought with the rest of the money; and laughed at me so much for my folly, that I cried with vexation; and the reflection gave me more chagrin than the whistle gave me pleasure.

This, however, was afterward of use to me, the impression continuing in my mind; so that often, when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, don't give too much for the whistle; and I saved my money.

As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who gave too much for the whistle.

When I saw one too ambitious of court favor, sacrifieing his time in attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, to attain it, I have said to myself, this man gives too much for his whistle.

When I saw another, fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs, and ruining them by that neglect, he pays indeed, said I, too much for his whistle.

If I knew a miser, who gave up every kind of comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the joys of benevolent friendship, for the sake of accumulating wealth, poor man, said I, you pay too much for your whistle.

When I met with a man of pleasure, sacrificing every laudable improvement of the mind, or of his fortune, to mere corporeal sensations, and ruining his health in their pursuit, mistaken man, said I, you are providing pain for yourself instead of pleasure, you give too much for your whistle.

If I see one fond of appearance, or fine elothes, fine houses, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts, and ends his career in a prison, alas! say I, he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle.

In short, I conceive that a great part of the miseries of mankind are brought upon them by the false estimates they have made of the value of things, and by their giving too much for their whistles.

THE ESSAY—HUMOROUS.

In a broad and loose sense the essay may include all expository writing that may justly be termed true literature; and also historical narrative and pure description, not mingled with narration of an imaginative and personal character. The distinctive thing about this kind of writing is that it lacks the dramatic element entirely.

In a narrower sense, however, the essay is a half whimsical and very digressive commentary upon some feature of human life. Charles Lamb furnishes the type, and when we speak of "the essay style" we have in mind such semi-humorous writing as that of Lamb, Addison, or Irving.

The following letter written by Lamb to Coleridge was no doubt the first form which the essay On Roast Pig took in Lamb's mind:—

LETTER TO S. T. COLERIDGE.

By Charles Lamb.

March 9, 1822.

Dear Coleridge:—It gives me great satisfaction to hear that the pig turned out so well: they are interesting creatures at a certain age. What a pity such buds should blow into the maturity of rank baeon! You had all some of the crackling and brain sauce. Did you remember to rub it with butter, and gently dredge it a little, just before the crisis? Did the eyes come away kindly with no Œdipean avulsion? Was the craekling the color of the ripe pomegranate? Had you no complement of boiled neek or mutton before it, to blunt the edge of delieate desire? Did you flesh maiden teeth in it? Not that I sent the pig, or can form the remotest guess what part Owen could play in the business. I never knew him give anything away in my life. He would not begin with strangers. I suspect the pig, after all, was meant for me; but at the unlucky juncture of time being absent, the present somehow went around to Highgate. To confess an honest truth, a pig is one of those things which I could never think of sending away. Teal, widgeon, snipes, barn-door fowls, dueks, geese—your tame villatie things

—Welsh mutton, collars of brawn, sturgeon, fresh or pickled, your potted char, Swiss cheese, French pies, early grapes, muscadines, I impart as freely unto my friends as to myself. They are but self-extended; but pardon me if I stop somewhere. When the fine feeling of benevolence giveth a higher smack than the sensual rarity, there my friends (or any good man) may command me; but pigs are pigs, and I myself therein am nearest to myself. Nay, I should think it an affront, an under-valuing done to Nature, who bestowed such a boon upon us, if in a churlish mood I parted with the precious gift. of the bitterest pangs of remorse I ever felt was when a child when my kind old aunt had strained her pocket-strings to bestow a sixpenny whole plum-cake upon me. In my way home through the Borough I met a venerable old man, not a mendicant, but thereabouts; a look-beggar, not a verbal petitionist, and in the coxcombry of taught charity I gave away the cake to him. I walked on a little in all the pride of an Evangelical peacock, when of a sudden my old aunt's kindness crossed me; the sum it was to her; the pleasure she had a right to expect that I---not the old impostor—should take in eating her cake; the ingratitude by which, under the color of a Christian virtue, I had frustrated her cherished purpose. I sobbed, wept, and took it to heart so grievously, that I think I never suffered the like; and I was right. It was a piece of unfeeling hypocrisy, and it proved a lesson to me ever after. The cake has long been masticated, consigned to the dunghill with the ashes of that unseasonable pauper.

But when Providence, who is better to us all than our aunts, gives me a pig, remembering my temptation and my fall, I shall endeavor to act towards it more in the spirit of the

donor's purpose.

Yours (short of pig) to command in everything. C. L.

EXERCISES.

Select half a dozen statements which would be absurd or meaningless unless regarded in a humorous light.

Should this letter have been divided into more paragraphs?

Is the essay style, as illustrated in this letter, conspicuous for its Unity?

Write a letter in this style descriptive of having a cold

THE ESSAY-RHETORICAL.

It has already been stated that Macaulay affords an admirable example of the balanced structure. He uses this particular rhetorical artifice, and the figure of speech known as antithesis, to an extent unknown in any other writer. The effect is highly artificial, and no young writer would care to imitate Macaulay on all occasions. At times, however, when a subject seems to rise to rhetorical heights, a single paragraph in Macaulay's manner will prove highly effective.

THE PERFECT HISTORIAN.

By Thomas Babington Macaulay.

The perfect historian is he in whose work the character and spirit of an age is exhibited in miniature. He relates no facts. he attributes no expression to his characters, which is not authenticated by sufficient testimony. But, by judicious selection, rejection, and arrangement, he gives to truth those attractions which have been usurped by fiction. In his narrative a due subordination is observed: some translations are prominent; others retire. But the scale on which he represents them is increased or diminished, not according to the dignity of the persons concerned in them, but according to the degree in which they elucidate the condition of society and the nature of man. He shows us the court, the camp, and the senate. But he shows us also the nation. He considers no anecdote, no peculiarity of manner, no familiar saying, as too insignificant for his notice which is not too insignificant to illustrate the operation of laws, of religion, and of education, and to mark the progress of the human mind. Men will not merely be described. but will be made intimately known to us. The changes of manners will be indicated, not merely by a few general phrases or a few extracts from statistical documents, but by appropriate images presented in every line.

If a man, such as we are supposing, should write the history of England, he would assuredly not omit the battles, the sieges, the negotiations, the seditions, the ministerial changes. But with these he would intersperse the details which are the charm of historical romances. At Lincoln Cathedral there is a beautiful painted window, which was made by an apprentice

out of the pieces of glass which had been rejected by his master. It is so far superior to every other in the church, that, according to the tradition, the vanquished artist killed himself from mortification. Sir Walter Scott, in the same manner, has used those fragments of truth which historians have scornfully thrown behind them in a manner which may well excite their envy. He has constructed out of their gleanings works which even considered as histories, are scarcely less valuable than But a truly great historian would reclaim those materials which the novelist has appropriated. The history of the government, the history of the people, would be exhibited in that mode in which alone they can be exhibited justly, in inseparable conjunction and intermixture. We should not then have to look for the wars and votes of the Puritans in Clarendon, and for their phraseology in Old Mortality; for one half of King James in Hume, and for the other half in the Fortunes of Nigel.

The early part of our imaginary history would be rich with colouring from romances, ballad, and chronicle. We should find ourselves in the company of knights such as those of Froissart, and of pilgrims such as those who rode with Chaucer from the Tabard. Society would be shown from the highest to the lowest,—from the royal cloth of state to the den of the outlaw: from the throne of the legate, to the chimney corner where the begging friar regaled himself. Palmers, minstrels, crusaders,—the stately monastery, with the good cheer in its refectory and the high-mass in its chapel,—the manor-house, with its hunting and hawking,—the tournament, with the heralds and ladies. the trumpets and the cloth of gold,—would give truth and life to the representation. We should perceive, in a thousand slight touches, the importance of the privileged burgher, and the fierce and haughty spirit which swelled under the collar of the degraded villain. The revival of letters would not merely be described in a few magnificent periods. We should discern, in innumerable particulars, the fermentation of mind, the eager appetite for knowledge, which distinguished the sixteenth from the fifteenth century. In the Reformation we should see, not merely a schism which changed the ecclesiastical constitution of England and the mutual relations of the European powers, but a moral war which raged in every family, which set the father against the son, and the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. Henry would be painted with the skill of Tacitus. We should have the change of his character from his profuse and joyous youth to his savage and imperious old age. We

should perceive the gradual progress of selfish and tyrannical passions in a mind not naturally inscnsible or ungenerous; and to the last we should detect some remains of that open and noble temper which endeared him to a people whom he oppressed, struggling with the hardness of despotism and the irritability We should see Elizabeth in all her weakness and in all her strength, surrounded by the handsome favorites whom she never trusted, and the wise old statesman whom she never dismissed, uniting in herself the most contradictory qualities of both her parents,—the coquetry, the caprice, the petty malice of Anne,-the haughty and resolute spirit of Henry. We have no hesitation in saying that a great artist might produce a portrait of this remarkable woman at least as striking as that in the novel of Kenilworth, without employing a single trait not authenticated by ample testimony. In the meantime, we should see arts cultivated, wealth accumulated, the conveniences of life improved. We should see the keeps, where nobles. insecure themselves, spread insecurity around them, gradually giving place to the halls of peaceful opulence, to the oriels of Longleat, and the stately pinnacles of Burleigh. We should see towns extended, deserts cultivated, and hamlets of fishermen turned into wealthy havens, the meal of the peasant improved, and his hut more commodiously furnished. We should see those opinions and feelings which produced the great struggle against the house of Stuart slowly growing up in the bosom of private families, before they manifested themselves in parliamentary debates. Then would come the civil war. Those skirmishes on which Clarendon dwells so minutely would be told, as Thucydides would have told them, with perspicuous conciseness. They were mcrely connecting links. But the great characteristics of the age, the loyal enthusiasm of the brave English gentry, the fierce licentiousness of the swearing, dicing, drunken reprobates, whose excesses disgraced the royal cause,—the austerity of the Presbyterian Sabbaths in the city, the extravagance of the independent preachers in the camp, the precise garb, the severe countenance, the pctty scruples, the affected accent, the absurd names and phrases which marked the Puritans,—the valour, the policy, the public spirit which lurked beneath these ungraceful disguises,—the dreams of the raving Fifth-monarchy-man, the dreams, scarcely less wild, of the philosophic republican,—all these would enter into the represcntation, and render it at once more exact and more striking.

The instruction derived from history thus written would be of a vivid and practical character. It would be received by the imagination as well as by the reason. It would be not merely traced on the mind, but branded into it. Many truths too, would be learned, which can be learned in no other manner As the history of states is generally written, the greatest and most momentous revolutions seem to come upon them like supernatural inflictions, without warning or cause. But the fact is, that such revolutions are almost always the consequences of moral changes, which have gradually passed on the mass of the community, and which ordinarily proceed far before their progress is indicated by any public measure. An intimate knowledge of the domestic history of nations is therefore absolutely necessary to the prognosis of political events. A narrative, defective in this respect, is as useless as a medical treatise which should pass by all the symptoms attendant on the early stages of a disease and mention only what occurs when the patient is beyond the reach of remedies.

A historian, such as we have been attempting to describe, would indeed be an intellectual prodigy. In his mind, powers scarcely compatible with each other must be tempered into an exquisite harmony. We shall sooner see another Shakspere or another Homer. The highest excellence to which any single faculty can be brought would be less surprising than such happy and delicate combination of qualities. Yet the contemplation of imaginary models is not an unpleasant or useless employment of the mind. It cannot indeed produce perfection; but it produces improvement, and nourishes that generous and liberal fastidiousness which is not inconsistent with the strongest sensibility to merit, and which, while it exalts our conceptions of the art, does not render us unjust to the artist.

Exercises.

Summarize this presentation of the perfect historian in three or four paragraphs written with as much of Macaulay's distinction of style as possible.

Describe the perfect novelist, or essay writer, or any other personage more familiar to you, as nearly in Macaulay's manner as possible.

SIMPLICITY.

It is well for us to compare these two skilful compositions of great and successful authors with a short speech delivered by a man whose reputation as an author depends chiefly upon this very speech. It is the Gettysburg address of Abraham Lincoln, and is a demonstration of the superior power of simplicity.

Edward Everett was the orator on the occasion of the dedication of the Gettysburg monument. He spoke for two hours with an eloquence which he had rarely surpassed. When he had finished President Lincoln was requested to say a few words. Those who had been listening to Everett trembled for the President's prestige. What could he say, plain man that he was, after the effulgent eloquence of the orator of the day?

Lincoln rose and spoke indeed a few simple words. His remarks form the shortest great speech which history records. But no great speech, however long, ever produced so mighty an effect. The audience was lifted above itself, and went away remembering little of Everett's speech, but every sentence that Lincoln had uttered. In a letter to Lincoln after the event, Everett said that he should have been glad if he could have produced in two hours a tithe of the effect Lincoln had produced in two minutes.

On analyzing this wonderful piece of literature we see that the words were chosen to express the speaker's exact meaning in the most simple and straightforward way. The mighty effect all depends on the phrasing and the skill of the arrangement.

THE GETTYSBURG SPEECH.

By Abraham Lincoln.

Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow the ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us,—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion,—that we hereby resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

As a further illustration of the effectiveness of a simple, but highly perfect style, let the student examine the following extracts from Hawthorne's introduction to *The Scarlet Letter*, one of the finest pieces of work he ever did.

Note how long the opening sentence is, and yet how perfectly clear; and the second sentence is another of the same kind. Throughout we may observe the value of delicate shades of emphasis, and the power inherent in the mere arrangement of words. There is also a delicate humor pervading this sketch; and we see one of the best possible examples of what rhythm and euphony should be in prose.

THE CUSTOM HOUSE. By Nathaniel Hawthorne.

In my native town of Salcm, at the head of what, half a century ago, in the days of old King Derby, was a bustling wharf,—but which is now burdened with decayed wooden warehouses,

and exhibits few or no symptoms of commercial life; except, perhaps, a bark or brig, half-way down its melaneholy length, discharging hides; or, nearer at hand, a Nova Scotia schooner. pitching out her cargo of firewood,—at the head, I say, of this dilapidated wharf, which the tide often overflows, and along which, at the base and in the rear of a row of buildings, the track of many languid years is seen in a border of unthrifty grass,here, with a view from its front windows adown this not very enlivening prospect, and thence across the harbor, stands a spaeious edifice of brick. From the loftiest point of its roof, during precisely three and a half hours of each forenoon, floats or droops, in breeze or calm the banner of the republic; but with the thirteen stripes turned vertically, instead of horizontally, and thus indicating that a civil, and not a military post of Uncle Sam's government is here established. Its front is ornamented with a portico of half a dozen wooden pillars, supporting a balcony, beneath which a flight of wide granite steps descends towards the street. Over the entrance hovers an enormous specimen of the American eagle, with outspread wings, a shield before her breast, and, if I recollect aright, a bunch of intermingled thunderbolts and barbed arrows in each elaw. With the customary infirmity of temper that characterizes this unhappy fowl, she appears, by the ficrceness of her beak and eye, and the general trueulency of her attitude, to threaten mischief to the inoffensive community; and especially to warn all citizens, careful of their safety, against intruding on the premises which she overshadows with her wings. Nevertheless, vixenly as she looks, many people arc sceking, at this very moment, to shelter themselves under the wing of the federal eagle; imagining, I presume, that her bosom has all the softness and snugness of an eiderdown pillow. But she has no great tenderness, even in her best of moods, and, sooner or later,—oftener soon than late,—is apt to fling off her nestlings, with a scratch of her elaw, a dab of her beak, or a rankling wound from her barbed arrows.

The pavement around about the above described edifice—which we may as well name at once as the Custom House of the port—has grass enough growing in its chinks to show that it has not, of late days, been worn by any multitudinous resort of business. In some months of the year, however, there often chances a forenoon when affairs move onward with a livelicr tread. Such occasions might remind the elderly citizen of that period before the last war with England, when Salem was a port by itself; not scorned as she is now, by her own merchants and ship-owners, who permit her wharves to erumble to ruin, while their ventures go to swell, needlessly and imperceptibly, the mighty flood of

commerce of New York or Boston. On some such morning, when three or four vessels happen to have arrived at once,usually from Africa or South America,—or to be on the verge of their departure thitherward, there is a sound of frequent feet, passing briskly up and down the granite steps. Here, before his own wife has greeted him, you may greet the sea-flushed shipmaster, just in port, with his vessel's papers under his arm, in a tarnished tin box. Here, too, comes his owner, cheerful or somber, gracious or in the sulks, accordingly as his scheme of the now accompilshed voyage has been realized in merchandise that will readily be turned to gold, or has buried him under a bulk of incommodities, such as nobody will care to rid him of. likewise,—the germ of the wrinkle-browed, grizzly-bearded, careworn merchant,—we have the smart young clerk, who gets the taste of traffic as a wolf-cub does of blood, and already sends adventurers in his master's ships, when he had better be sailing mimic boats upon a mill-pond. Another figure in the scene is the outward-bound sailor in quest of a protection; or the recently arrived one, pale and feeble, seeking a passport to the hospital. Nor must we forget the captains of the rusty little schooners that bring firewood from the British provinces; a rough looking set of tarpaulins, without the alertness of the Yankee aspect, but contributing an item of no slight importance to our decaying trade.

Cluster all these individuals together, as they sometimes were, with other miscellaneous ones to diversify the group, and, for the time being, it made the Custom House a stirring scene. More frequently, however, on ascending the steps, you would discern—in the entry, if it were summer time, or in their appropriate rooms, if wintery or inclement weather—a row of venerable figures, sitting in old-fashioned chairs, which were tipped on their hind legs back against the wall. Oftentimes they were asleep, but occasionally might be heard talking together, in voices between speech and a snore, and with that lack of energy that distinguishes the occupants of almshouses, and all other human beings who depend for subsistence on charity, on monopolized labor, or anything else, but their own independent These old gentlemen—seated, like Matthew, at the receipt of customs, but not very liable to be summoned thence, like him, for apostolic errands—were Custom House officers.

Furthermore, on the left hand as you enter the front door, is a certain room or office, about fifteen feet square, and of a lofty height; with two of its arched windows commanding a view of the aforesaid dilapidated wharf, and the third looking across a narrow lane, and along a portion of Derby Street. All three give glimpses of the shops of grocers, block-makers, slop-sellers,

and ship-chandlers; around the doors of which are generally to be seen, laughing and gossiping, clusters of old salts, and such other wharf-rats as haunt the Wapping of a seaport. The room itself is cobwebbed, and dingy with old paint; its floor is strewn with gray sand in a fashion that has elsewhere fallen into long disuse; and it is easy to conclude, from the general slovenliness of the place, that this is a sanetuary into which womankind, with her tools of magic, the broom and mop, has very infrequent ac-In the way of furniture, there is a stove with a voluminous funnel; an old pine desk, with a three-legged stool beside it; two or three wooden-bottom chairs, exceedingly decrepit and infirm; and—not to forget the library—on some shelves, a score or two of volumes of the Aets of Congress, and a bulky Digest of the Revenue Laws. A tin pipe ascends through the ceiling, and forms a medium of vocal communication with other parts of the edifice. And here, some six months ago,—paeing from corner to corner, or lounging on the long-legged stool, with his elbow on the desk, and his eyes wandering up and down the columns of the morning newspaper,—you might have recognized, honored reader, the same individual who welcomed you into his cheery little study, where the sunshine glimmered so pleasantly through the willow branches, on the western side of the Old Manse. now, should you go thither to seek him, you would inquire in vain for the Locofoco Surveyor. The besom of reform has swept him out of office; and a worthier successor wears his dignity, and pockets his emoluments.

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The discovery was soon made, I imagine, that the new Survevor had no great harm in him So, with lightsome hearts, and the happy consciousness of being usefully employed,—in their own behalf, at least, if not for our beloved country,—these good old gentlemen went through the various formalities of office. Sagaeiously, under their spectacles, did they peep into the holds of vessels! Mighty was their fuss about little matters, and marvelous, sometimes, the obtuseness that allowed greater ones to slip between their fingers! Whenever such a mischance oceurred,—when a wagon-load of valuable merchandise had been smuggled ashore, at noonday, perhaps, and directly beneath their unsuspicious noses,—nothing could exceed the vigilance and alaerity with which they proceeded to lock, and double lock, and secure with tape and sealing wax, all the avenues of the delin-Instead of a reprimand for their previous negliquent vessel. gence, the case seemed rather to require an eulogium on their praiseworthy caution, after the mischief had happened; a grateful recognition of the promptitude of their zeal, the moment that there was no longer any remedy.

Unless people are more than commonly disagreeable, it is my foolish habit to contract a kindness for them. The better part of my companion's character, if it have a better part, is that which usually comes uppermost in my regard, and forms the type whereby I recognize the man. As most of these old Custom House officers had good traits, and as my position in reference to them, being paternal and protective, was favorable to the growth of friendly sentiments, I soon grew to like them all. It was pleasant, in the summer forenoons,—when the frequent heat, that almost liquefied the rest of the human family, merely communicated a genial warmth to their half-torpid systems,—it was pleasant to hear them chatting in the back entry, a row of them all tipped against the wall, as usual; while the frozen witticisms of past generations were thawed out, and came bubbling with laughter from their lips. Externally the jollity of aged men has much in common with the mirth of children: the intellect, any more than a deep sense of humor, has little to do with the matter; it is, with both, a gleam that plays upon the surface, and imparts a sunny and cheery aspect alike to the green branch, and gray, mouldering trunk. In one case, however, it is real sunshine; in the other, it more resembles the phosphorescent glow of decaying wood.

It would be sad injustice, the reader must understand, to represent all my excellent old friends as in their dotage. first place, my coadjutors were not invariably old; there were men among them in their strength and prime, of marked ability and energy, and altogether superior to the sluggish and dependent mode of life on which their evil stars had cast them. moreover, the white locks of age were sometimes found to be the thatch of an intellectual tenement in good repair. But, as respects the majority of my corps of veterans, there will be no wrong done, if I characterize them generally as a set of wearisome old souls, who had gathered nothing worth preservation from their varied experience of life. They seemed to have flung away all the golden grain of practical wisdom, which they had enjoyed so many opportunities of harvesting, and most carefully to have stored their memories with the husks. They spoke with far more interest and unction of their morning's breakfast, or yesterday's, to-day's, or to-morrow's dinner, than of the shipwreck of forty or fifty years ago, and all the world's wonders which they had witnessed with their youthful eyes.

The father of the Custom House—the patriarch, not only of this little squad of officials, but, I am bold to say, of the respectable body of tide-waiters all over the United States—was a certain permanent Inspector—He might truly be termed a legitimate

son of the revenue system, dyed in the wool, or, rather, born in the purple; since his sire, a Revolutionary colonel, and formerly collector of the port, had created an office for him, and appointed him to fill it, at a period of the early ages which few living men can now remember. This Inspector, when I first niet him, was a man of four score years, or thereabouts, and certainly one of the most wonderful specimens of wintergreen that you would be likely to discover in a lifetime's search. With his florid cheek, his compact figure, smartly arrayed in a bright-buttoned blue coat, his brisk and vigorous step, and his hale and hearty aspect, altogether he seemed—not young, indeed—but a kind of new contrivance of Mother Nature in the shape of man, whom age and infirmity had no business to touch. His voice and laugh, which perpetually echoed through the Custom House, had nothing of the tremulous quaver and cackle of an old man's utterance; they came strutting out of his lungs, like the crow of a cock, or the blast of a clarion. Looking at him merely as an animal,—and there was very little else to look at,—he was a most satisfactory object, from the thorough healthfulness and wholesomeness of his system, and his capacity, at that extreme age, to enjoy all, or nearly all, the delights which he had ever aimed at, or conceived The careless security of his life in the Custom House, on a regular income, and with but slight and infrequent apprehensions of removal, had no doubt contributed to make time pass lightly The original and more potent causes, however, lay in the rare perfection of his animal nature, the moderate proportion of intellect, and the very trifling admixture of moral and spiritual ingredients: these latter qualities, indeed, being in barely enough measure to keep the old gentleman from walking on all fours. He possessed no power of thought, no depth of feeling, no troublesome sensibilities; nothing, in short, but a few commonplace instincts, which, aided by the cheerful temper that grew inevitably out of his physical well-being, did duty very respectably, and to general acceptance, in lieu of a heart. He had been the husband of three wives, all long since dead; the father of twenty children, most of whom, at every age of childhood or maturity, had likewise returned to dust. Here, one would suppose, might have been sorrow enough to imbue the sunniest disposition, through and through, with a sable tinge. Not so with our old Inspector! One brief sigh sufficed to carry off the entire burden of these dismal reminiscences. The next moment, he was as ready for sport as any unbreeched infant; far readier than the Collector's junior clerk, who, at nincteen years, was much the elder and graver man of the two.

I used to watch and study this patriarchal personage with, I

think, livelier curiosity, than any other form of humanity there presented to my notice. He was, in truth, a rare phenomenon; so perfect, in one point of view; so shallow, so delusive, so impalpable, such an absolute nonentity, in every other. My conclusion was that he had no soul, no heart, no mind; nothing, as I have already said, but instincts; and yet, withal, so cunningly had the few materials of his character been put together, that there was no painful perception of deficiency, but on my part, an entire contentment with what I found in him. It might be difficult—and it was so—to conceive how he should exist hereafter, so earthly and sensuous did he seem: but surely his existence here, admitting that it was to terminate with his last breath, had been not unkindly given; with no higher moral responsibilities than the beasts of the field, but with a larger scope of enjoyment than theirs, and with all their blessed immunity from the dreariness and duskiness of age.

One point, in which he had vastly the advantage over his four-footed brethren, was his ability to recollect the good dinners which it had made so small portion of the happiness of his life to eat. His gourmandism was a highly agreeable trait; and to hear him talk of roast meat was as appetizing as a pickle or an As he possessed no higher attribute, and neither sacrificed nor vitiated any spiritual endowment by devoting all his energies and ingenuities to subserve the delight and profit of his maw, it always pleased and satisfied me to hear him expatiate on fish, poultry and butcher's meat, and the most eligible methods of preparing them for the table. His reminiscences of good cheer, however ancient the date of the actual banquet, seemed to bring the savor of pig or turkey under one's very nostrils. flavors on his palate, that had lingered there not less than sixty or seventy years, and were still apparently as fresh as that of the mutton chop which he had just devoured for his breakfast. have heard him smack his lips over dinners, every guest at which, except himself, had long been food for worms. It was marvelous to observe how the ghosts of bygone meals were continually rising up before him; not in anger or retribution, but as if grateful for his former appreciation and seeking to resuscitate an endless series of enjoyment, at once shadowy and sensual. tenderloin of beef, a hindquarter of veal, a sparcrib of pork, a particular chicken, or a remarkably praiseworthy turkey, which had perhaps adorned his board in the days of the elder Adams, would be remembered; with all the subsequent experience of our race, and all the events that brightened or darkened his individual career, had gone over him with as little permanent effect as the passing breeze. The chief tragic event of the old man's life,

so far as I could judge, was his mishap with a certain goose which lived and died some twenty or forty years ago; a goose of most promising figure, but which, at table, proved so inveterately tough that the carving-knife would make no impression on its carcass, and it could only be divided with an axe and handsaw.

But it is time to quit this sketch; on which, however, I would be glad to dwell at considerably more length, because, of all men whom I have ever known, this individual was fittest to be a Custom House officer. Most persons, owing to the causes which I may not have space to hint at, suffer moral detriment from this peculiar mode of life. The old Inspector was incapable of it, and were he to continue in office to the end of time, would be just as good as he was then, and sit down to dinner with just as good an appetite.

EXERCISE.

Make notes of the ideas in each paragraph, one paragraph at a time, and, closing the book, immediately try to reproduce them in your best language. Then compare with the original, and try to reproduce the next paragraph in a better way. When this has been done once, reproduce the whole from the series of notes first made. (This style will be one of the hardest to understand and really imitate, in spite of its seeming simplicity. Only such a thorough study as would be necessitated by the above exercise will serve for its mastery.)

FICTION.

For purposes of practice in composition, nothing is better than story writing. A story is easily remembered. Moreover, it is a complete composition, and its construction is more or less natural. Stories may be told to children in the earliest grades, and if properly selected they will hold the attention as no other kind of composition can do; and soon the pupils will be able to retell them in their own words with

enough skill to interest the rest of the class. Interest and effectiveness are always the test of success; and they are indispensable to the best selection of words and the best arrangement of phrases.

We offer here two admirable specimens of short story writing, one very modern, and one very old. In certain respects the old cannot be surpassed. Yet no one in these days would think of writing a story in the Bible style.

THE STRING.1

BY GUY DE MAUPASSANT.

By every road around Goderville the countrymen with their wives were coming toward the town, for it was market-day. The men plodded on, their bodies lurching forward at every movement of their long twisted limbs, which were deformed by hard work,—by holding the plough, which throws up the left shoulder and twists the figure; by mowing grain, which forces out the knees in the effort to stand quite steady; in short, by all the tedious and painful toil of the fields. Their blue blouses, starched and shining as if they had been varnished, with collars and cuffs stitched in a neat design, were inflated about their bony forms, exactly like balloons ready to soar, but putting forth a head, two arms, and two legs.

Some were leading a cow or a calf by a rope; and, just behind, their wives lashed the animal over the back with a leafy branch, to hasten its pace. On their arms the women carried large baskets, whence protruded the heads of chickens or of ducks; and they walked with shorter, quicker steps than the men, their withered, upright figures wrapped in scanty little shawls pinned over their flat breasts, their hair closely done up in white cloths, with a cap above.

Now a cart passed by, jerked along by an ambling nag; and queerly it shook up the two men sitting side by side and a woman at the bottom of the vehicle, who held onto the sides to ease the heavy jolting.

In the market-place at Goderville a crowd had gathered, a mingled multitude of mcn and beasts. The horns of the cattle,

^{&#}x27;(From The World's Greatest Short Stories, edited by Sherwin Cody. The translation is copyrighted, 1902, by A. C. Mc-Clurg & Co. Reproduced by permission.)

the tall, long-napped hats of the rich peasants, and the head-dresses of the peasant women rose above the surface of that living sea; and the harsh, shrill, squeaking voices made a continuous and savage roar; while at times there arose above it a burst of laughter from the husky throat of an amused country fellow, or the long-drawn moo of a cow tied to a wall.

It all smelled of the stable, of milk and dung, of hay and sweat, emitting that pungent and disagreeable odor of man and beast, which is peculiar to the inhabitants of the fields.

Master Hauchecorne, of Bréauté, had just arrived at Goderville, and was making his way towards the market-place when he saw on the ground a little piece of string. Master Hauchecorne, economical like all true Normans, considered everything worth picking up which might be of use; so he stooped painfully down,—for he suffered from rheumatism,—took the bit of twine from the ground, and was preparing to roll it up with care, when he noticed Master Malandain, the harness-maker, on his doorstep, looking at him. They had once had a difference in regard to a halter, and they remained angry, with ill will on both sides. Master Hauchecorne was seized with a feeling of shame at being caught thus by his enemy looking in the dirt for a piece of string. He hastily concealed his find under his blouse, then in the pocket of his trousers; then he pretended still to be looking on the ground for something he failed to find, and at last went away towards the market-place, his head thrust forward, his body doubled up by his pains.

In a moment he was lost in the clamorous and slow-moving crowd, agitated by its interminable bargains. The peasants felt of the cows, went away, came back, perplexed and forever afraid of being cheated, never daring to decide, eyeing the seller, always searching to discover the tricks of the man and the defects of the beast.

The women had placed their great baskets at their feet; and they drew out their poultry and placed it on the ground, where it lay with legs tied, scared eye and scarlet comb.

They listened to offers, dryly maintaining their price with impassive countenance; or, all at once deciding to accept the proposed reduction, they cried out to the customer who was slowly moving away:

"Oh, say, Mas' Anthime, I'll let you have it."

Then little by little the market-place was emptied, and when the Angelus sounded noon, those who lived at a distance scattered to the inns.

At Jourdain's the great dining room was filled with eaters, just as the vast court was filled with vehicles of every kind,—

carts, gigs, wagons, tilburies, nameless tilt-carts, yellow with mud, misshapen, patched, their shafts pointing to the skies like two arms, or else their noses to the ground and their tails in the air.

Opposite the diners as they sat at table the fire burned freely in the huge chimney, throwing out a lively warmth upon the backs of the row upon the right. On three spits chickens, pigeons, and legs of lamb were turning before the fire; and a savory odor of roast meat, and of gravy streaming over its crisp, browned surface, floated up from the hearth, kindling the appetite till the mouth watered for the viands.

All the aristocracy of the plough were eating there with Master Jourdain, innkeeper and horse-dealer, a knave whose

pockets were well lined.

The plates went round, and were emptied, as were the jugs of yellow cider. - Each told of his affairs, his bargains, and his sales; and all discussed the crops. The season was good for vegetables, but a little wet for grain.

All at once the rub-a-dub of the drum sounded in the court before the house. In a moment every man was on his feet (save some of the more indifferent) and rushed to doors or windows, his mouth still full, and his napkin in his hand.

After he had finished his tattoo, the public crier raised his voice, launching his jerky phrases with pauses quite out of

place:

'Be it known to the inhabitants of Goderville, and in general to all—persons present at the market, that there has been lost this morning, on the road from Beuzeville, between—nine and ten o'clock, a black leather pocketbook, containing five hundred francs and business papers. You are requested to return it—to the mayor's office, without delay, or to Master Fortuné Houlbrèque, of Manneville. There will be twenty francs reward."

Then the man went away. Far down the street the muffled beating of the drum might have been heard, and the faint voice of the crier repeating his announcement.

In a moment everyone was talking of the incident, discussing the chances Master Houlbrèque had of recovering or not recovering his pocketbook.

So the meal went on.

As they were draining their coffee cups, a police officer appeared on the threshold.

He asked:

"Is Master Hau hecorne, of Bréauté, here?"

Master Hauchecorne, who was seated at the opposite side of the table, answered:

"That's me."

The officer replied:

'Master Hauchecorne, will you have the kindness to accompany me to the office of the mayor? His honor, the mayor,

wishes to speak with you.'

The farmer, surprised, disturbed, finished his glass at a gulp, rose, and, even more bent than in the morning, since the first steps after each period of rest were particularly difficult, he started along, saying over and over:

"That's me, that's me."
So he followed the officer.

The mayor was waiting for him, seated in an armchair. He was the notary of the district, a big, severe man, pompous in his speech.

"Master Hauchecorne," said he, "you were seen this morning to pick up, on the road from Beuzeville, the pocketbook lost

by Master Houlbrèque, of Manneville."

The old fellow stood looking at the mayor, speechless, already terrified by the suspicion that rested upon him, without in the least knowing why.

"Me, me! I picked up that pocketbook?"

"Yes, you."

"Word of honor, I don't know nothing about it at all."

"You were seen."

"Seen? Me? Who says he saw me?"

"M. Malandain, the harness-maker."

Then the old man remembered, understood; and, reddening with anger, he said:

"Uh! 'e saw me, did 'e, the rat! 'E saw me pick up this

string here; see here, your honor."

And, fumbling at the bottom of his pocket, he drew out a little piece of twine.

But the mayor incredulously shook his head.

"You will not make me believe, Master Hauchecorne, that M. Malandain, who is a man of his word, has mistaken this string for a pocketbook."

The farmer, furious, raising his hand and spitting to attest

his good faith, repeated:

"Nevertheless, it is the truth of the good God, the solemn truth, your honor. There! on my soul and salvation I swear it."

The mayor replied:

"After you had picked up the object, you even hunted about a long time in the dust, to see if some pieces of money had not slipped out of it."

The good man was stifled with indignation and fear.

"How can they tell!—how can they tell!—such lies as that to libel an honest man! How can they tell!"

He might protest: No one believed him.

He was confronted with M. Malandain, who repeated and sustained his declaration. They abused one another for an hour. At his request, Master Hauchecorne was searched. Nothing was found on him.

At last the mayor, much perplexed, sent him away, warning him that he would lay the matter before the court and ask for

instructions.

The news had spread. On his leaving the mayor's office, the old man was surrounded and questioned with a curiosity that was serious or jesting, but into which no indignation entered. And he proceeded to tell the story of the string.

They did not believe him. They laughed.

He went along, stopped by everyone, stopping his acquaintances again and again, going all over his story and repeating his protestations, showing his pockets turned inside out to prove there was nothing in them.

They said to him:

"Go on, you old rogue!"

And he grew angry, working himself into a fever, desperate at not being believed, for he did not know what to do, and kept telling his story over and over.

Night came on. It was time to go home. He set out along the road with three of his neighbors, to whom he showed the place where he had picked up the bit of cord; and all along the road he kept talking of the incident.

That evening he made the round in the village of Bréauté, to let everybody know. He told his story only to the incredulous.

He was ill of it all night.

The next day, about one o'clock in the afternoon, Marius Paumelle, a laborer on the farm of Master Breton, gardener at Ymauville, returned the pocketbook and its contents to Master Houlbrèque of Manneville.

This man's statement was to the effect that he had found the thing on the road, but not knowing how to read, he had carried it home and given it to his master.

The news spread. Master Hauchecorne was informed of it. He started off at once, and immediately began to retell the story as completed by the dénouement. He was triumphant.

"I di'n' care so much for the thing itself, you understand," said he, "but it was the lie. There is nothing nastier than being set down for a liar."

All day he talked of his adventure; he told it on the road to

the people who passed, at the public houses to the people who drank, and the next Sunday to those who gathered at the church. He even stopped strangers to tell them about it. Now he felt easy, and yet something troubled him, without his knowing exactly what. People seemed to smile as they listened. They did not appear convinced. He felt as if they babbled behind his back.

On Tuesday of the following week he turned up at the market at Goderville, sent there only by the need of telling his tale.

Malandain, standing in his doorway, began to laugh as he saw him pass. Why?

He accosted a farmer of Criquetot, who did not allow him to finish, but, giving him a tap in the pit of his stomach, cried in his face:

"Go on, you old rogue!" Then the fellow turned on his heel.

Master Hauchecorne stood speechless, more unhappy than ever. Why did every one call him "old rogue?"

When he sat down at the table at Jourdain's, he proceeded to explain the affair.

A horse-dealer of Montivilliers cried at him:

"Come, come, now, you old scamp, we know all about you and your piece of string."

"But they found the pocketbook!"

The other went on:

"Don't speak of it, daddy; there is one who finds it and one who takes it back. No one sees, no one knows; but you give yourself away."

The peasant sat dumbfounded; he understood at last. They accused him of having sent the pocketbook back by a confederate, by an accomplice.

He tried to protest. Every one at the table began to laugh. He could not cat his dinner, and went away amid their ridicule.

He went home, ashamed and indignant, choking with rage, overcome with confusion, all the more in despair that he was capable, with his Norman artfulness, of doing that of which they accused him, and even of pluming himself on it as a good trick. His innocence dimly seemed to him impossible to prove, his trickiness being so well known, and he felt struck to the heart by the injustice of the suspicion.

Then he began again to tell of his adventure, adding new arguments each time, more energetic protests, and more solemn oaths which he thought out in his hours of solitude, his mind being occupied with the story of the string. People believed him the less, the more subtle and complicated his argument became.

"Ha! liar's proofs, those!" they said behind his back.

He felt it; it gnawed at his vitals; he wore himself out with useless efforts.

The jokers now made him tell "The Story of the String" for their amusement, as a soldier who has been on a campaign is made to tell of the battle.

His mind, deeply affected, grew weak.

Toward the end of December he took to his bed.

He died carly in January, and in the delirium of his death agony he protested his innocence, repeating:

"A li'l' string, a li'l' string—see, here it is, your honor."

THE STORY OF RUTH.

FROM THE HOLY BIBLE.

It came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab,—he and his wife and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimclech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab: the name of one was Orpah, and the name of the other was

Ruth. And they dwelled there about ten years.

And Mahlon and Chilion died also, both of them: and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband. Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab; for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each to her mother's house. The Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of your husbands." Then she kissed them.

And they lifted up their voice and wept; and they said unto her, "Surely, we will return with thee unto thy people."

And Naomi said, "Turn again, my daughters; why will ye go with me? Turn again, my daughters, go your way."

And they lifted up their voice and wept again. And Orpah

kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth elave unto her.

And she said, 'Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people and unto her gods! Return thou after thy sister-in-law."

And Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee—For whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

When Naomi saw that Ruth was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her. So they two went

until they came to Bethlehem.

And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, "Is this Naomi?"

And she said unto them, "Call me not Naomi [pleasant], call me Mara [bitterj; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty. Why then call ye me Naomi, seeing that the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?"

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughterin-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab; and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley-harvest.

And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth of the family of Elimelech, and his name was Boaz.

And Ruth said unto Naomi: "Let me now go to the field and glean ears of eorn after him in whose sight I shall find grace."

And Naomi said unto her, "Go, my daughter."

And she went, and eame, and gleaned in the field after the reapers; and her hap was too light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said unto the reapers, "The Lord be with you."

And they answered him, "The Lord bless thee!"

Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, "Whose damsel is this?"

And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, "It is the Moabitish damsel that eame back with Naomi out of the country of Moab. And she said, 'I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves. So she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house."

Then said Boaz unto Ruth, "Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens; let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them. Have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? And when thou art athirst go unto the vessels and drink of that which the young men have drawn."

Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"

And Boaz answered and said unto her, "It hath fully been showed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law, since the death of thine husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother and the land of thy nativity, and art eome unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou are eome to trust."

Then she said, "Let me find favor in thy sight, my lord; for that thou has comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens."

And Boaz said unto her at meal-time, "Come thou hither, and eat of the bread and dip thy morsel in the vinegar"

And she sat beside the reapers, and he reached her parched eorn; and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not; and let fall also some of the handsful on purpose for her, and leave them that she may glean them, and rebuke her not."

So she gleaned in the fields until even, and beat out that she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it up and went into the eity; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned, and she brought forth and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.

And her mother-in-law said unto her, "Where hast thou gleaned to-day, and where wroughtest thou? Blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee!"

And she showed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought and said, "The man's name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz."

And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. The man is near of kin unto us; one of our next kinsmen."

And Ruth the Moabitess said, "He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men until they have ended all my harvest."

And Naomi said unto Ruth, her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field."

So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley-harvest and of wheat-harvest, and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

Then Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing floor. Wash thyself, therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiments upon thee, and get thee down to the floor; but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie; and thou shalt go in and uncover his feet and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do."

And Ruth said unto her, "All that thou sayest unto me I will do." And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her.

And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn. And she came softly and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself; and behold! a woman lay at his feet And he said, "Who art thou?"

And she answered, "I am Ruth, thine handmaid, for thou art a near kinsman."

And he said, "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter; for thou has showed more kindness in the latter end than in the beginning; inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest; for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman; howbeit, there is a kinsman nearer than I. Tarry this night, and it shall be, in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part; but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to

thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth. Lie down until the morning."

And she lay at his feet until the morning. And she rose up before one could know another.

And he said, "Let it not be known that a woman came unto the floor." Also he said, "Bring the veil that thou hast upon thee and hold it."

And when she held it he measured six measures of barley and laid it upon her.

And she went into the city, and when she came to her mother-in-law she said, "Who art thou, my daughter?"

And she told her all that the man had done to her; and she said, "These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, 'Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law.'"

Then Naomi said, "Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall; for the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day."

Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there. And, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by, unto whom he said, "Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here."

And he turned aside, and sat down.

And Boaz took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit ye down here."

And they sat down.

And he said unto the kinsman, "Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land which was her brother Elimelech's; and I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it; but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is none to redeem it besides thee, and I am after thee."

And he said, "I will redeem it."

Then said Boaz, "What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance."

And the kinsman said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance Redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it."

Now this was the manner in former times in Israel, concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things: a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor; and this was a testimony in Israel. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz,

"Buy it for thee." So he drew off his shoe.

And Boaz said unto the elders and unto all the people, "Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, at the hand of Naomi. Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of this place: ye are witnesses this day."

And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders said: "We are witnesses. The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel; and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem; and let thy house be like unto the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman."

So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife.

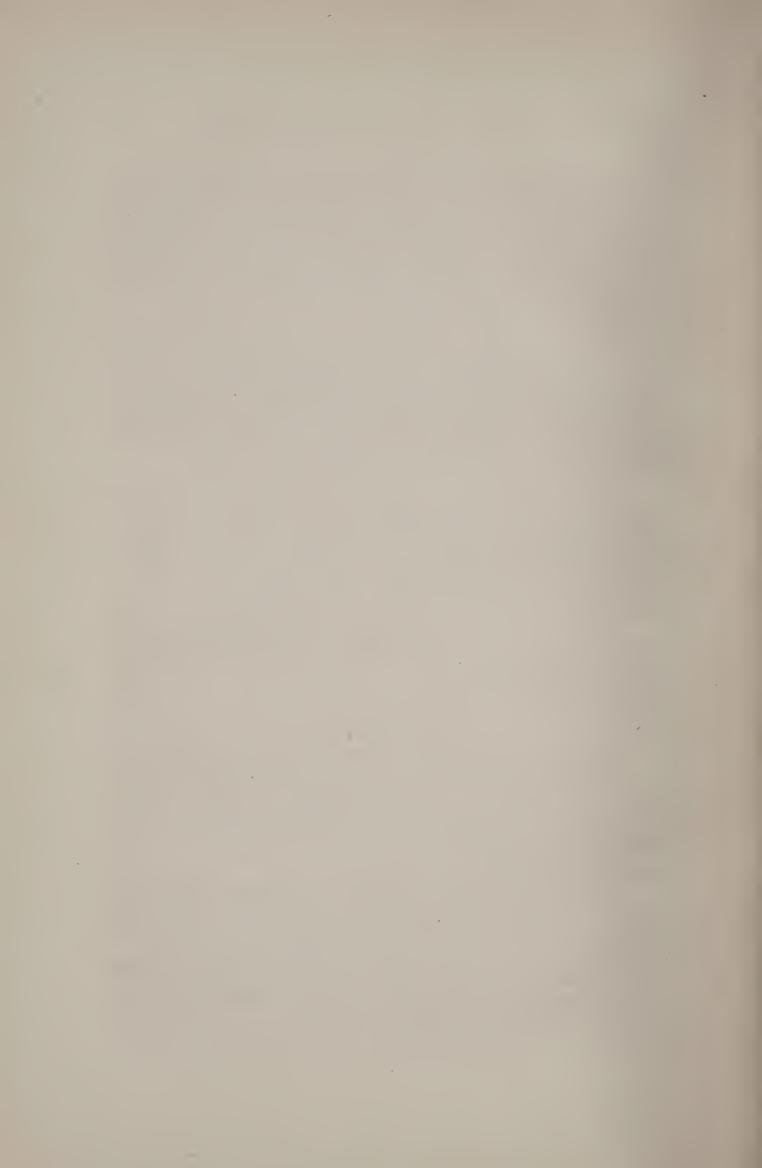
And Ruth bare a son. And the women said unto Naomi, "Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him."

And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the women, her neighbors, gave it a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi;" and they called his name Obed.

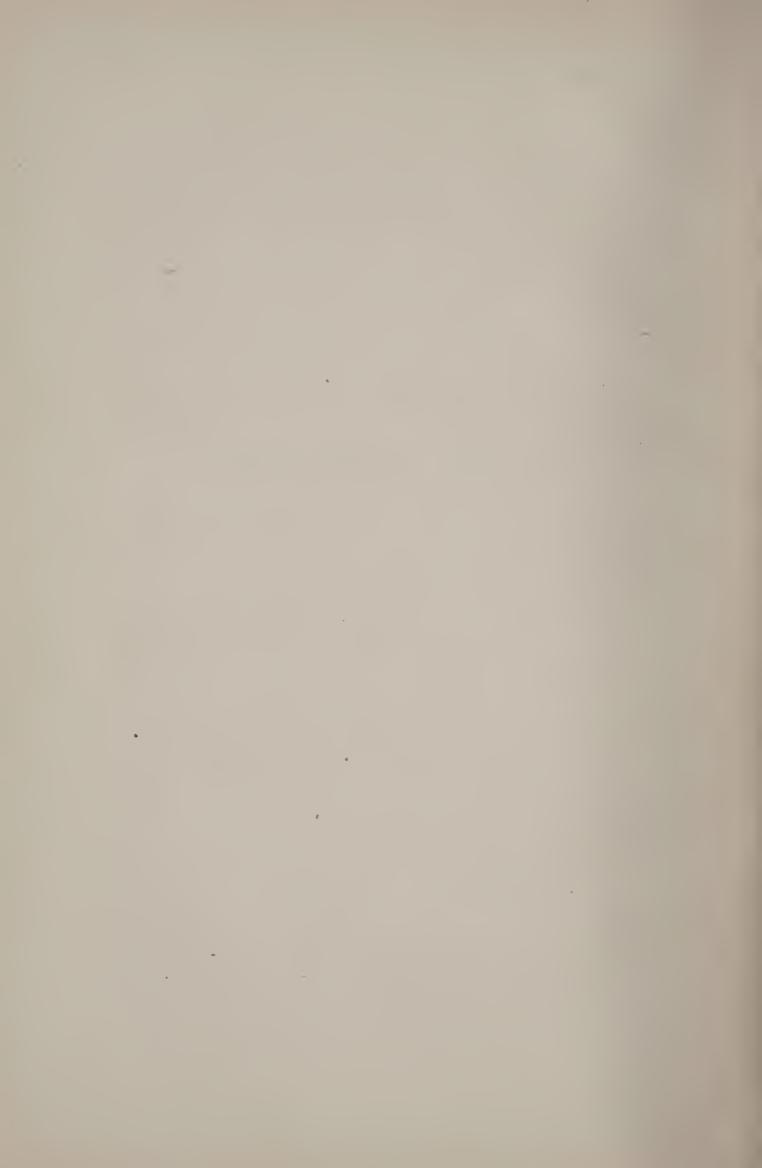
EXERCISES.

Rewrite the story of *The String*, making the scene American instead of French, and introducing the changes necessary that the descriptions shall be true to life, but follow the form of the original as closely as possible.

Rewrite *The Story of Ruth* in modern language, preserving as far as possible the simple narrative of the Bible story, yet without a single archaic expression. Nearly all the *ands* at the beginning of sentences should be omitted, as the usage is purely archaic in such a narrative as this.



II. ENGLISH LITERATURE.



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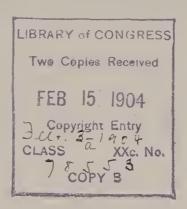
NORMAL COURSE

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ENGLISH LITERATURE

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ENGLISH LITERATURE.

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English Literature.

INTRODUCTORY.

We study English literature, not that we may know the names and dates of all great authors, but that we may read all books intelligently. We are not in a position to appreciate even the latest novel unless we know something of the principles upon which great novels have been written; and indeed any literature is to the uneducated person what music would be to some one who had never heard a note of music in his life. Such a person would be unable to make out the significance either of the piece of literature or the music. So, first of all, we should learn to appreciate good literature—should come to know the characteristics of a great poem, a great essay, or a great story, so that we could judge any poem, essay, or story we might read.

Again, literature has its currents of developments just as the ocean has its currents of hot and cold water, and we may say that English literature has a sort of geography. This influence came in at this time, that other influence at some other time; we are now at a certain point. One who did not know that epic poetry is very, very old, and that the novel was invented only a few scores of years ago, would be unable to weigh either a novel or an epic poem with justice, or speak intelligently of either in current conversation. Ignorance of the development of

English literature shows itself in conversation on literary topics as surely as ignorance of current events as told in the newspaper would show itself in a conversation on politics. So for many reasons a knowledge of the history of literature is desirable; but this knowledge must deal with principles and historical influences far more than it does with names and dates. There is more in getting the correct point of view than in acquiring the facts that can be fitted into that point of view when it has once been obtained. At any rate, the facts without the point of view, or the plan of arrangement, are as useless as the bricks for a house without the architect's plan. Anyone can buy bricks; but not everyone knows how to design and build a house.

THREE KINDS OF LITERATURE.

We may classify standard literature under three general heads, Poetry, Essay, and Fiction.

Poetry may be grouped in three divisions, Epic poetry, 'Lyric poetry, and Reflective poetry. The epic is a narrative drama in verse. The great examples of epic poetry are Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Virgil's Æneid, Dante's Inferno, and Milton's Paradise Lost. Lyric poetry includes everything that resembles a song or imitates the effect of music, if the words are arranged as verse. Nearly all popular short poems are lyrics, as Tennyson's songs in The Princess, Break, Break, Break, Crossing the Bar, and others; Burns's songs, most of Longfellow's short poems, etc. Reflective poetry may include those

¹ Dramatic poetry belongs in the category of epic poetry, or is akin to it.

poems between the short lyric and the long epic, most of which contain reflections on life or didactic teachings, such as Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, Wordsworth's *Prelude*, Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh*, etc.

The Essay is technically a short prose composition which treats of life in a somewhat whimsical and distinctly literary style. We may, however, for convenience include under this head short historical criticisms, oratory, and general argumentative articles bordering on that great class of compositions which are beyond the realm of literature, such as pure history, science, and philosophy. Lamb is the typical essayist, but we also include in the first class Addison, Steele, Swift, Johnson, Goldsmith, Macaulay, DeQuincey, and Matthew Arnold, as well as Carlyle and Emerson. Many of the historical writers, like Irving, Prescott, and Motley, have produced history which is also literature, and may be classed under the general head of the Essay. Even some of Darwin's and Huxley's scientific discussions might be called literature, and included in this general class. When we speak of "prose," we usually mean the style of the Essay.

Fiction is the direct heir of dramatic poetry, though no longer written in metre or cast in dialogue form. The great stories of human life were originally told as epic poems; then, in the time of Shakspere, these stories took the form of plays; while today plays can seldom be ranked as literature, and the best of our literary production comes from the novelists. Under the head of Fiction we may include poetic dramas, metrical romances, such as Scott's Lady of the Lake, and modern prose fiction—such of it as is worthy of being ranked as literature at all.

We should remember that classification is merely for our convenience in study. It is not all important that we be able to place any given production definitely in one class or in another, since many are on the border between two general divisions, and belong to both or neither. It is not usual to class dramatic poetry under the head of fiction, but the writer believes this will help us better to understand both. The best critics agree that fiction is akin to poetry, and this classification accentuates that universal view.

POETRY.

Epic poetry is no longer written, and, with the exception of *Paradise Lost*, English Literature offers no great epic.

Lyric poetry is almost the only form of verse which is likely always to be popular. There are three kinds of lyric poetry—the Ballad, which is a song telling a short story, such as Longfellow's Wreck of the Hesperus; the common song; and the short musical poem, which is like real music in many ways, though it is seldom actually sung. To this latter class belong the chief great short poems of our literature. Of actual songs, few can properly be classed as literature. When we have mastered the lyric, we may find great interest in reading reflective poems by Wordsworth, Browning, Tennyson, and others; but such poems are seldom universally popular.

We have not yet defined "literature," though attention has been called to the distinction between writing that is "literature" and writing that is not. It is, perhaps, better to consider the subject in detail, and we will begin by asking, What is a true poem?

Verse consists in words strung together in metre, but poetry has higher qualities. Because of these higher qualities the word poetry is often applied to literature that is not written in metre, though we usually think of poetry as possessing metre and sometimes rhyme. As a rule, all verse except that technically known as "blank verse" (iambic pentameter), is rhymed.

The higher qualities of poetry, which are also more or less characteristics of all true literature, are—

Beauty, or physical perfection as perceived by the imagination through the education of the senses.

Nobility, or moral perfection; and Truth, or intellectual perfection.

Truth alone would not give us a poem, for we find abundant truth in science, history and philosophy; nor will nobility alone give us a true poem, nor nobility united with truth, as it always must be. We may fancy that beauty alone would make a great poem; but the fact is that just as an ignoble or treacherous character will show itself in a person's face, and in time mar the most perfect beauty of countenance, so a poem that is eternally beautiful must necessarily be noble and true. Poems like those of Oscar Wilde have seemed to possess beauty, but the element of untruth and lack of nobility in them is slowly killing their fame. George 'Sand wrote novels artistically very striking, but lack of truth in them is causing them already to be forgotten.

Poetry not only appeals to the sense of sight through the imagination (or, as we have said, the imagination as educated by all the senses), but also directly to the sense of hearing through the musical sound of the words chosen and the metrical arrangement. This direct physical appeal to the ear is the point at which poetry meets music.

In no poet will the element of musical sound be found in such perfection and variety as in Tennyson, and we could not select a better illustration of this element than the well-known lyric, *Break*, *Break*, *Break*!

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

This poem must be read aloud to be appreciated. On reading it aloud we see that it is musical; and also that the sound of the words distinctly suggests the sound of the breaking sea, and also the thoughts which the sight of the sea calls up.

The sound of the words is the first thing that attracts our attention; the next is the feeling that

the sounds combined with the meanings of the words produce. A feeling of sadness and mystery comes over us, a feeling which we ourselves might have if we were standing by the breaking sea. But we perceive that the poet can feel very much more keenly than we can, and the effect that the sea has produced on him is much greater than it would have produced on us. Yet by his words he makes us share his feelings. Hence we come to have emotions which the poet alone can give us.

Many people study poetry by examining every word critically. Looked at critically, the meanings of the words here used are a jumble of vagueness. We are not concerned with the process by which the poet made a jumble of vague ideas into a great poem; but we do easily see that he has produced a feeling in us of melancholy beauty and mystery which raises our soul.

We therefore perceive that the first thing to note in literature is the *feeling produced* upon us, not the literal meaning of the words.

There is nothing very noble in this poem. Melancholy beauty is the chief thing. For nobility let us turn to Longfellow's *Psalm of Life*.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
"Life is but an empty dream!"
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!

And the grave is not its goal;
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow, Is our destined end or way; But to act, that each to-morrow Find us farther than to-day. Art is long, and time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant! Let the dead Past bury its dead! Act—act in the living Present! Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another, Sailing o'er life's solemn main, A forlorn and shipwrecked brother, Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing, With a heart for any fate; Still achieving, still pursuing, Learn to labor and to wait.

Again we note, first of all, the pleasing musical flow of the words and the appeal to our feeling. But in this poem beauty is secondary to nobility. The poem produces in us a *feeling of nobility*. Probably we do not think very carefully of the exact meaning of the words. There are many references which possibly we shall never trace out, but the feeling comes at once, and continues to be the thing for which we read this poem.

We may now turn to Browning's poem, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, and read stanzas VI, VII, XXIII, XXIV, and XXV.

VI.

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

VII.

For thence—a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
What I aspire to be,
And was not, comforts me:
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale.

* * * * * *

XXIII

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work," must sentence pass,
Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:

XXIV.

But all, the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account:
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount:

XXV.

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped:
All I could never be,
All men ignored in me,
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

Once more we are attracted, first, by the peculiar sound of the words. We are not quite sure that the sound of these words is beautiful; but that does not matter. We find here a truth expressed, which we at once feel to be a beautiful truth. We also realize that the poet makes us feel this truth, and that for the purposes of our life we need to feel it far more than we need merely to comprehend it and analyze it. In science we simply analyze truth, and there we leave it; in poetry truth is not analyzed, but it seems to enter into our very being and become a part of our philosophy of life, that philosophy which helps us to play our part nobly in the world. And the satisfaction we have in feeling this truth as a part of ourselves is certainly closely akin to beauty. It is a peculiar beauty, a beauty of principles, of divine order, of eternal logic: it brings into our hearts the everlasting majesty of God.

So we see that poetry, whatever else it may do, always makes an appeal to the feelings—our feeling for beauty, our feeling for nobility, our feeling for truth. The poet as an artist must know how to use words in such a way that the feeling he desires will be produced. This "feeling" may be regarded as the "sense for beauty" in all its forms, physical, moral, and intellectual. And not only must poetry deal with these higher subjects in an emotional way, but the poet must be master of the technical means by which the effect is produced. Those technical means are his "art."

THE ESSAY.

Matthew Arnold speaks of poetry as an impassioned criticism of life. By common consent poetry is looked on as properly dealing with higher things, prose with lower; or, at any rate, poetry can on occasion soar higher than it is the province of prose to do. For all that, prose literature, on its lower plane, must also be in some sense a criticism of life, if we are indeed to rank it as literature. Prose that is a mere criticism of truths such as we find in science or history is not really literature. To be literature it must, at least, deal with those things which we perceive in poetry through our feelings. And we shall also find that true prose literature, like poetry, makes us feel the truth beside, or instead of, making us merely perceive it with the intellect.

One of the peculiar qualities of prose as such (good prose, real prose literature), is that it possesses (or rather may possess) humor. Good poetry is naturally serious. Good prose is very often humorous or touched with humor. The seriousness of poetry may carry us into morbid feelings. Humorous prose corrects that tendency to morbidness and surrounds us with a salty, healthy tonic. Poetry is the deep blue sky and air above us; prose the strong salt ocean under us.

All critics agree that prose finds its best illustration (so far as prose is great literature) in the so-called essayists, of whom Lamb is easily chief. What this prose is we may easily see from the following extract from Lamb's *Dissertation upon Roast Pig*:

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed that if a worldly pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favor of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in *roast pig*.

Of all the delicacies in the whole mundus edibilis, I will maintain it to be the most delicate—princeps obsoniorum.

I speak not of your grown porkers—things between pig and pork—those hobbydehoys—but a young and tender suckling—under a moon old—guiltless as yet of the sty—with no original speck of the amor immunditiæ, the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest—his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble and a grumble—the mild forerunner, or præludium, of a grunt.

He must be roasted. I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled,—but what a sacrifice of the exterior

tegument.

There is no flavor comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, crackling, as it is well called; the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure of this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance—with the adhesive oleaginous—O, call it not fat! but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it—the tender blossoming of fat—fat cropped in the bud—taken in the shoot—in the first innocence—the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food—the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna—or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is "doing,"—it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string! Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age! he hath wept out his pretty eyes—radiant jellies—shooting stars.

We find here none of the leading characteristics of poetry, at least, in any marked degree. There is no special beauty, no nobility, and no lofty or emotional truth. This description is whimsical, amusing, and—comfortable. In one respect this passage from Lamb is like poetry: it appeals to the feeling, and its value lies in the feeling it produces.

If we must give that feeling a name, we may speak of it as healthy and restful. One great office of literature is to give the weary human mind rest and amusement, and this should be accomplished without any ugliness, without anything ignoble, without anything untrue. However much prose may differ from poetry, we should remember that it can never be at war with it.

Another office of prose is to put the mind of the reader in the right attitude of thought toward any subject. This is sometimes criticism, such as we find in the essays of Matthew Arnold; sometimes historical description, such as we find in the essays of Macaulay; sometimes philosophical discussion of life, as in the essays of Carlyle and Emerson. In none of these do we find imitation of musical sounds, as in poetry, nor any very impassioned appeal to the emotions. Yet the object of all is to make us feel right toward the subject in hand, as well as to understand it. This element of feeling that binds the truth of what is said into the bundle of life, and makes it have a personal value for us in our struggle to know and live in a larger way, is the essential thing which differentiates prose that is good literature from prose that is not. Literature must be a "criticism of life," and half of life, perhaps nine-tenths, is in our feeling.

The point at which the essay comes nearest to poetry is to be found in such work as De Quincey's "impassioned prose," as he calls it, especially the lofty and truly poetic pictures in his *The English Mail Coach*, Suspiria de Profundis, and parts of *The Confessions of an English Opium Eater*,

FICTION.

Not all so-called poetry is true poetry according to the standards we have established. Matthew Arnold, in his essay on The Study of Poetry, maintains that Dryden and Pope are merely prose writers in rhyme, since they lack the serious elements of beauty, nobility, and lofty truth. And as so much literature in the form of poetry is merely rhymed prose, so not a little prose literature is really highly poetic in substance. It is a peculiarity of fiction that it may take the form either of poetry or prose, and in its nature it combines the emotional elements of poetry and of prose. It may be lofty and noble, beautiful and true to the higher perceptions of life, and it may be lacking in all these and gain its value from humor or critical discussion of life. In so far, however, as it is true literature, it deals with life as we live it, not with science or philosophy, and its aim is to make us feel rightly rather than to think correctly. In form, all fiction should be dramatic. In this it traces its origin to the epic poem, and on this account it is well for us, if we are going to appreciate the difference between fiction that is literature and fiction that is not, that we should connect it with the dramatic poetry of Shakspere.

The drama, as we see it in Shakspere, is poetry in form, but it is by no means all poetry in substance. All the mere "business" of the play must necessarily be prose, and in "business" we would include all the commonplace speeches which are needed chiefly to aid the development of the plot. Only in special scenes does the drama rise to the dignity of true

poetry, even in Shakspere: for in the nature of things it cannot be otherwise.

Also in modern prose fiction we may find passages of lofty beauty and ideal nobility worthy of the most perfect poetry. We may even find all the devices of imagery, and, too, the regular succession of accents that constitute metre. Much of the best prose may be scanned without the least difficulty, and the metre, though not broken into lines, may be as perfect as in any recognized poem.

The only essential difference between dramatic poetry and prose fiction is that prose fiction supplies descriptions of all the scenes, and uses the dialogue only as an occasional means of expressing the thoughts and emotions of the characters, while dramatic poetry uses nothing but dialogue. It will therefore be seen that prose fiction has a larger and freer range, and that in these respects it resembles epic poetry much more than it does dramatic poetry. It has, however, a far greater freedom than either dramatic or epic poetry, and loses thereby something of their lofty intensity. It is more an every-day matter.

In fiction we find nearly all the elements of lyric poetry and of essay prose, though both are in a weaker form. But, in addition to these, we find the dramatic element.

And what is the dramatic?

In a word, drama deals with the lives of individual human beings. The literature we have hitherto studied deals very seldom, if ever, with individuals, but rather with life in general, or with emotions and impressions common to many. Whenever a particular and special human life is turned

from its straight course by any means, we have an illustration of 'the dramatic.' A sudden success, a sudden death, a sudden change of fortune, when considered in connection with some special person, real or imaginary, is dramatic. No human life can be turned from its even course ever so little without producing the dramatic; and unless some life is altered in some way, we have no foundation for a real story.

Those works of fiction are real literature which make us *feel* the life and passions and sufferings of the characters described. To produce such a feeling, the writer must have had a profound and special intuitive understanding of the truth of life, with the multifarious elements which enter into it.

There is not space here to illustrate the subject as in the case of lyric poetry and the essay, but we would suggest that the student do so for himself by reading, first, Shakspere's *Merchant of Venice*, and noting how the characters are *felt* by the reader to be real; then reading Hawthorne's *The Great Stone Face*, and noting how one character, that of Ernest, is changed by the silent influence of the face, and also how all the elements of beauty and nobility as well as truth unite in this piece of prose as they do in poetry.

PART I.

THE LITERATURE OF ENGLAND.

I.

ENGLISH LITERATURE BEFORE SHAKSPERE.

To all intents and purposes, modern English literature begins with Shakspere. All that went before him merely prepared the way for him, and all since his day is reckoned back to him. So we see that real and great English literature is only three hundred years old.

Of preceding literatures that especially influenced English literature, we should mention, first, the literature of Greece, which gave the world splendid epic poetry, splendid dramatic poetry, splendid philosophy and prose writing. Following the Greek came the Roman, which in its finer elements was but an imitation of the Greek, but which added law and force to the refined and intellectual Greek. These two literatures were always familiar to cultivated men in Europe, and of course in England, and must be reckoned an essential element in shaping English literature.

The Middle Ages produced little more than vague and strained romance, and theorizing not based on observation of facts. But with the Renaissance in Italy there came a new and powerful literature, along with a wonderful development of painting. Beside Michael Angelo and Raphael, we have Dante and all the minor Italian poets and prose writers, such as Petrarch and Boccaccio.

This group of writers influenced most deeply the first really English poet, Chaucer.

The English people consisted for the most part, at least so far as the production of literature was concerned, of two great races, the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman-French. The Anglo-Saxons had a rude literature, of which Beowulf, the Hymns of Cædmon, and contributions of Alfred the Great were most noteworthy. Then came the Normans and crushed out all opportunity for the Anglo-Saxon nature to assert itself in literature. For a time everything refined and cultured in England was Norman-French. The Normans brought their troubadours and introduced into England the ballad.

At last the real English language, a mixture of Anglo-Saxon and Norman, began to show itself. The common every-day words were largely Saxon, and the more special terms of culture were French. Literary men did not use it, preferring Latin, or some other language, until Chaucer appeared. He boldly wrote his poems in the English dialect (as it was then regarded).

Chaucer was born between 1328 and 1345 and died in 1400. His period is about fifty years later than that of Dante. He took many of his tales from Petrarch; but though the Canterbury Tales, his chief work, are for the most part translations, Chaucer accomplished the immense task of introducing the English language to literature and doing much to fix its form in books. Until his time it had existed almost wholly in the speech of the people.

With the exception of the author of *Piers the Ploughman*, no other noteworthy poet wrote the English language until Edmund Spenser appeared.

Spenser came of a noble family, and had among his friends Sidney and Raleigh; yet he died of starvation, it is said. But in *The Faerie Queene* he has given us the most melodious and richly imaginative verse of our early literature, and even invented a stanza known to this day as the Spenserian stanza.

Spenser was the forerunner of what must be regarded as the most brilliant epoch of English literature, the Elizabethan age. In that age the New World was being opened up. The Spanish Armada was defeated, and England became queen of the sea. Vast schemes were set on foot, and the English people in general felt there was nothing they could not accomplish.

The theatres had been suffering a winter of suppression, but now were about to burst into full bloom in such a spring of human joyousness as

England had never seen before.

Contemporary with Shakspere were several great dramatists, who, had they not been so completely overshadowed by the master, would have held a conspicuous place in our literature. Among them the greatest was Ben Jonson, a man who had far more learning than Shakspere, and next to Jonson was Marlowe, with Beaumont and Fletcher (who wrote in partnership), Webster, Greene, and others.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

(1340 - 1400.)

CHIEF WORK: Canterbury Tales (finished about 1393).

The right comment upon it is Dryden's: "It is sufficient to say, according to the proverb, that here is God's plenty." And again: "He is a perpetual fountain of good sense." It is by a large, free, sound representation of things that poetry, this high criticism of life, has truth of substance; and Chaucer's poetry has truth of substance.

-Matthew Arnold, Essays in Criticism.

EDMUND SPENSER.

(1552 - 1599.)

CHIEF WORK: The Faerie Queene (1590).

He pours out the wealth of his respect and tenderness at his heroine's feet. But he was also a poet, that is, pre-eminently a creator and dreamer, and that most naturally, instinctively, unceasingly. He has but to close his eyes, and apparitions arise; they abound in him, crowd, overflow; in vain he pours them forth; they continually float up, more copious and more dense. Many times, following the inexhaustible stream, I have thought of the vapors which rise incessantly from the sea, ascend, sparkle, commingle their gold and snowy scrolls, while beneath them new mists arise, and others again beneath, and the splendid procession never grows dim or ceases.

—Taine, English Literature.

II.

SHAKSPERE.

William Shakspere (the Shakspere critics accept this spelling as that found in the signature to his will, though Shakspeare is the more common spelling, adopted from the printed editions of his books) was born in 1564 and died in 1616. His father was a well-to-do man at Stratford-on-Avon, and held various village offices. William attended a "grammar school" (or what we should now call a high school), and knew a little French, Latin, and Greek. But his father was unfortunate, William had to leave school, and at eighteen married a girl eight years older than himself. Five months later she gave birth to a child, and the future author went to London to seek his fortune. his experiences in London were we have no means of knowing; but we judge that he soon found employment at a theatre and became an actor. By the time he was twenty-five years old he probably began to rewrite old plays for the use of his fellowactors, and soon made attempts of his own. He published some verses in 1593, and in 1596 or 1597 Romeo and Juliet and the Merchant of Venice probably appeared not far apart, and established the dramatist's reputation. He had already begun to make money, and after the appearance of these two plays he was comfortably established and began to buy property. His great historical plays followed first; then, beginning with 1600, he turned

his mind passionately to tragedy, producing his greatest works.²

Space does not permit us to make a personal study of Shakspere. We can only pause to find in him the elements which are to reappear in later English literature, and for that purpose *The Merchant of Venice* may serve our purpose as well as any play.

The Merchant of Venice is called a comedy, but fun is but a small element in it. If we look on Shylock with pity we almost think it is a tragedy. In all his comedies, as in all his tragedies, Shakspere takes a serious, natural, healthy view of life, and a broader view than any other writer has ever taken. His supreme greatness lies largely in these characteristics, so common and yet so rare.

The second thing we note is that in thinking of Shakspere's work, we have in our mind a long train of characters, and the characters are even more important than the compositions in which they appear. The Merchant of Venice is merely a name which suggests to us Shylock first of all, then Portia, and all their followers and friends. These persons are real and individual. No historical character is so vivid to us as Shylock, and the name of Julius Cæsar suggests to us the character in Shakspere's play so promptly and certainly that we do not even know that the Cæsar of history was quite a different man.

The way to study Shakspere successfully is to read but a little at a time, and to begin with that which is really interesting. If we can once become

²As to Shakspere's character, consult Professor Dowden's Shakspere: His Mind and Art (doubtless the noblest criticism on Shaksperc ever produced).

interested in a single scene or act of one play, we are likely to find that interest the entering wedge to a lasting and growing fondness and admiration for his great personality. A brief outline for a method of studying *The Merchant of Venice* may serve as an illustration of what may be done with other plays.

First, read some introduction to the play, such as that contained in Dowden's Shakspere Primer, or Hudson's introduction to his school edition of the play, or Lamb's tale in Tales from Shakspere, the object being to get the general plot. Then, if interest is sufficient, read the play through hastily merely for the plot. It will be found that the first act introduces the characters and gives the motive which will produce the catastrophe; the second act shows the peculiar situation which will work out in the plot development; the third act contains the climax of thought, the dramatic turning point of the plot, the crash of events that will produce the catastrophe; the fourth act contains the details of the plot development; the fifth act, the final catastrophe. One act or another will be more interesting according to the beauty and human interest of the particular scenes. This analysis applies to all of Shakspere's plays.

In *The Merchant of Venice* we will find the court scene in the fourth act by far the most interesting portion of the play, for here Portia appears as a lawyer and judge, and Shylock is crushed. But, as preparatory to enjoying and appreciating this great scene, it will be well to read thoughtfully all the scenes in which Portia appears, as follows: In Act I, Sc. 2; in Act II, Scs. 1, 7, and 9; in Act III, Scs. 2 and 4; and the whole of Act IV. Then

let us review the scenes in which Shylock appears, namely: Act I, Sc. 3; Act II, Sc. 5 (and perhaps Sc. 8, though Shylock does not appear himself); Act III, Scs. 1 and 3; and the whole of Act IV.

When we have become deeply interested in Portia and Shylock by this method of detailed study, we will be interested in studying the side plot of Jessica and Lorenzo, thrown in merely to set off and accentuate the dramatic points in the story of Portia and Shylock; and many will be amused by reading in consecutive order the scenes relating to Gobbo, the fool. The other characters in the play have no special interest in themselves, merely serving to complete the dramatic machinery. We have no special interest at first event in Bassanio and Antonio. The play is named for Antonio simply because he is the center of the plot development.

In the study of other plays, read good introductions, like those of Hudson or Dowden, and select the characters which most appeal to you, following each through by itself, when once the plot is clearly in the mind. Little, however, can be accomplished till the general plot is mastered.

The plays best worth studying are, of history—Richard III and Henry V; of comedy—As You Like It, Much Ado About Nothing, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Taming of the Shrew; of tragedy—Julius Cæsar, Antony and Cleopatra, Lear, Othello, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, and Hamlet; of romance—the Tempest (imagining that we find Shakspere himself in Prospero, this play practically closing his career and giving us his final outlook on life.)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE.

(1564 - 1616.)

CHIEF WORKS: Venus and Adonis (1593); Lucrece (1594); Sonnets (1592–1608) The following plays were mentioned by Meres in his Palladis Tamia: Wit's Treasury, in 1598 (three of which had been published in 1597): Love's Labour Lost, Comedy of Errors, Two Gentlemen of Verona, A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2 and 3 Henry VI, Richard II, Richard III, King John, Merchant of Venice, Romeo and Juliet. The remaining plays, with the date of first publication and conjectural date of writing, are as follows:

Histor	у.	First 1	published.
1 and 2 Henry IV.—1597-8.	(1st) 1598	(2nd)1600
Henry V.—1599	(p	irated)1600
Comedy.			
Taming of the Shrew—1597	(?)		1623
Merry Wives of Windsor—15			
Much Ado About Nothing-1			
As You Like It—1599			1623
Twelfth Night—1600–1			1623
All's Well That Ends Well—1			
Measure for Measure—1603.			
Troilus and Cressida—1603 () revised 16	07	1009
Tragedy.			
Julius Cæsar—1601			
Hamlet—1602. 1603 (pirate			
Othello—1604			
King Lear—1605			
Macbeth—1606			
Antony and Cleopatra—16071623 Coriolanus—16081623			
Timon of Athens—1607–8			
Timon of Athens—1007–8			1020
Roman			*
Pericles—1608			
Cymbeline—1609			1623
The Tempest—1610			
A Winter's Tale—1610–11			1623
Fragments.			
Two Noble Kinsmen—1612			1623
Henry VIII.—1612-13			

Two views of the character of Shakspere have been offered for our acceptance; we are expected to make a choice between the two. According to one of these views, Shaksperc stands bcfore us as a cheerful, self-possessed, and prudent man, who conducted his life with sound worldly judgment; and he wrote plays about which he did not greatly care; acquired property, about which he cared much; retired to Stratford, and, attaining the end of his ambition, became a wealthy and respectable burgess of his native town, bore the arms of a gentleman, married his two daughters with prudence, and died with the happy consciousness of having gained a creditable and substantial position in the world. The other view of Shakspere's character has been recently presented by M. Taine with his unflagging brilliancy and energy. According to this second conception, Shakspere was a man of almost superhuman passions, extreme in joy and pain, impetuous in his transports, disorderly in his conduct, heedless of conscience, but sensitive of every touch of pleasure—a man of inordinate, extravagant genius.

* * * *

Our conclusion is that Shakspere lived and moved in two worlds—one limited, practical, positive; the other a world opening into two infinities, an infinity of thought and an infinity of passion. He did not suppress either life to the advantage of the other; but he adjusted them, and by stern and persistent resolution held them in the necessary adjustment

-Dowden, Shakspere: His Mind and Art.

III.

MILTON, DRYDEN, POPE.

If Shakspere is the first of English poets, by universal consent Milton is the second; yet the works of few great poets are as little read as those of Milton. Where Shakspere's works sell each year in thousands, Milton's sell in hundreds, or perhaps only fifties. Yet of all poets the world has produced, none has given us loftier poetry than Milton.

The gaieties of the Elizabethan age were followed in the seventeenth century by the revolution which resulted in the beheading of Charles I, the dictatorship of Cromwell, and the establishment of a rigid Puritan era. All the theatres were closed and only Puritan literature had a chance of being even printed. The great Puritan poet was Milton.

As a young man Milton wrote some most charming lyrics, the chief of which are L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, and the Hymn to the Nativity (or Christmas Hymn, the most inspiring work of its kind in our

language).

But Milton was a political prose writer and produced many pamphlets on a great variety of subjects for his political party. In his old age he became blind, and his wife and daughters were not kind to him. In his solitary unhappiness he wrote his great epic poem, *Paradise Lost* and its companion poem, *Paradise Regained*. *Paradise Lost* was sold, it is said, for £15 (\$75).

Paradise Lost is like a lofty and forbidding crag; only now and then has anyone the courage and strength to climb it. It is best read a page or two

at a time. The great central figure and the only very clear character is Satan. The passages referring to him are far finer poetry than any other portions of the book.

After the Revolution came the Restoration. The people, tired of Puritanism, called Charles II to the throne and inaugurated an era of license and debauchery as wild and free as the Puritan reign of Cromwell had been severe. The theatres were opened and a great number of accomplished dramatists appeared, most of whom may aptly be described as hangers-on of the court. The most accomplished of these dramatists was Dryden.

Taine gives a very good summary of Dryden's character. He was a most highly accomplished poet, a good critic, a successful dramatist; but Dryden and all the other poets of this age lacked heart, sincerity, and the passionate knowledge of life so conspicuous in Shakspere. Dryden admired Shakspere, but regretted that he was not correct in his art, and thought there were other poets greater than he—possibly Dryden himself.

Dryden's plays have little or no interest for us to-day, and his criticisms are of value only to the curious student. Almost the only work which will greatly fascinate the modern reader is his *Alexander's Feast*, in which we find the very best of Dryden as a poet.

Dryden was followed at the end of Queen Anne's reign by Pope, who carried the peculiar artificial poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to its greatest perfection. At one time Pope was

almost universally placed among the greatest of English poets; but his immense reputation has steadily declined throughout the nineteenth century; one critic after another has riddled him, and now many assert that his verse contains no true poetry at all, but is merely rhymed prose—that he was the "high priest" of an "age of prose and reason," not of poetry. Yet we find in him the highest possible accomplishments of an artificial and polished style.

Pope has given us many maxims, such as "The proper study of mankind is man." His *Essay on Man*, containing as it does a great many of these epigrams, is probably his most interesting work for us to-day; but *The Rape of the Lock*, a fanciful conceit, was in his own day rated as perhaps his best. He made a translation of Homer which is still read, though it is acknowledged to be very unhomeric.

In the age of Dryden and Pope there were many lesser lights possessed of poetic ability. On the border between the age which reached its climax in Pope and the new poetic age which began with Burns, we find, among others, Gray, the author of Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard, and a little later Cowper (1731–1800), author of John Gilpin, a homely, sentimental, retiring poet, chiefly interesting to home-keeping and modest people. His best work is the long didactic poem, The Task.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

JOHN MILTON.

(1608 - 1674.)

CHIEF WORKS: L'Allegro and Il Penseroso (1632); Masque of Comas (1634); Lycidas (1637); Paradise Lost (1665 finished, published 1667); Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes (1671).

Read him only several pages at a time: only thus he is great; otherwise all that is exaggerated, commonplace, and strange will arrest and shock you; but if you give yourself up to him, you will be carried away and captivated. The vast amount of his works rolls impetuously in a current of eloquence.

-- Taine, English Literature.

JOHN DRYDEN.

(1631 - 1700.)

CHIEF WORKS: Absalom and Achitophel (1681-1682), and The Medal and Macflecknoe (1682); The Hind and the Panther (1697); Alexander's Feast (1697); Fables (tales from Boccaccio and Chaucer, 1700).

Here Dryden has gathered in one line a long argument; there a happy metaphor has opened up a new perspective under the principal idea; further on, two similar words, united together, have struck the mind with an unforeseen and cogent proof; elsewhere a hidden comparison has thrown a tinge of glory or shame on the person who least expected it. These are all artifices or successes of a calculated style, which chains the attention, and leaves the mind persuaded or convinced.

—Taine, English Literature.

ALEXANDER POPE.

(1688 - 1744.)

CHIEF WORKS: Essay on Criticism (1711); The Rape of the Lock (1712); translation of the Iliad (1715–1720), and the Odyssey (1723–1725); Dunciad (1728); Essay on Man (1732); Eloisa to Abelard.

It is a great misfortune for a poet to know his business too well; his poetry then shows a man of business and not the poet. I wish I could admire Pope's works of imagination, but I cannot.

-Taine, English Literature.

For the opposite view compare the following:

Alexander Pope,—within certain narrow but impregnable limits one of the greatest masters of poetic form that the world has ever seen, and a considerable, though sometimes overrated, satirist.

—Saintsbury, A Short History of English Literature.

THOMAS GRAY.

(1716 - 1771.)

CHIEF WORK: Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard (1750).

Gray is our poetical classic of that literature and age.

—Matthew Arnold, Essays in Criticism

IV.

THE RISE OF ENGLISH PROSE.

The rise of any particular literary form is usually marked by one or two men of genius who accidentally discover it, as it were, as Chaucer discovered (or invented) English poetry; and then, after a considerable lapse of time, during which nothing at all is done with the new form, suddenly a group of writers take it up and make it a permanent addition to the world's literature. It was thus that Spenser, Shakspere, and their contemporaries developed the new poetry that Chaucer had prepared the way for. And English prose was discovered and perfected in much the same way, Francis Bacon with his Essays preparing the way for the Queen Anne group (Addison, Steele, Swift, Goldsmith, Johnson), who finally made the English prose essay a recognized element of the world's literature.

Perhaps the book that has had the greatest influence upon English prose is the Authorized, or King James Version of the Bible, published in 1611. It is a marvelous well of English undefiled, and to it not only Bunyan, but all other English prose writers have owed more than can possibly be estimated.

Francis Bacon was an Elizabethan writer, the contemporary of Shakspere, and is supposed by some to be the real author of Shakspere's works. His whole character and manner of thought, as we know them in his acknowledged works, are utterly different from the character and manner of thought of Shakspere as we know them in his plays. Bacon was a corrupt politician, finally ending his career in

disgrace after having been made Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans. (He was never "Lord Bacon," as some people call him.) In spite of his unsavory character, however, all acknowledge that he was a great scientist and writer. He invented the "inductive logic," or modern method of scientific investigation (explained in his Latin work, Novum Organum), and wrote the first great English prose essays. As first published, these essays were a mere bundle of epigrams; but in later life he developed them into works of genuine prose literature.

Bacon had no respect for the English language, always writing in Latin when he could, and the literary significance of his essays was not understood in his own day. The first English prose essays to be known as the beginning of a far-reaching literary movement were those which appeared in two very peculiar newspapers conducted by Richard Steele, the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*. It was the name of Joseph Addison, however, not that of Steele, which was made famous by them.

Addison was born of a good family, and held various offices under the government, finally attaining to the honorable position of secretary of state. He wrote poetry, including some of our finest religious hymns, and a miscellaneous variety of prose works; but it was in his *Spectator* essays that he made himself immortal.

And what is it that made these essays of Addison so famous?

The answer is not far to seek. These essays have all the charm, all the intimacy, all the genial humor and friendly interest in the affairs of the

reader, which are to be found in the best conversation. Joseph Addison was a polished and highly delightful gentleman, and he undertook to make himself agreeable, as a polished and delightful gentleman, in a little printed sheet to be served every morning at breakfast. The people found him as charming and likable in print as he might have been in real life, with the advantage that he could talk through the printed page to several thousand people every morning, instead of to only half a dozen at his favorite coffee-house.

Though we owe the great success of the essay to Addison, we must not forget our debt to Samuel Johnson, whose Rambler and other works are too heavy to be popular to-day, but whose conversation has been immortalized in Boswell's great Life; to Jonathan Swift, whose genius ran more in the direction of bitter and terrible satire (for example, The Tale of a Tub and Gulliver's Travels); to Goldsmith, whose greatest works are his poems, The Deserted Village and the Traveller, and his famous novel, The Vicar of Wakefield. All these men contributed to the rise of the essay, and Johnson in his dictionary of the English language did a wonderful service in making our tongue fixed and permanent.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Francis Bacon. (1561—1626.)

CHIEF WORKS: Essays (first edition, 1597; enlarged edition, 1625); Advancement of Learning (1605); Novum Organum (1620).

He had begun, as we see in the earliest forms of the Essays, with a very curt, stenographic, sharply antithetic form; and though he suppled and relaxed this afterwards, he never quite

attained the full, languorous grace of Donne and Browne; but he became gorgeous enough later, the glitter of antithesis being saved from any tinsel of "snip-snap" effect by the fulness of his thought, and his main purport being by degrees set off with elaborate paraphernalia of ornament and imagery

—Saintsbury, A Short History of English Literature.

RICHARD STEELE. (1672—1729)

CHIEF WORK: Essays in the Tatler and Spectator (1709–1712).

More durable has been the impress on our prose of the great critical contemporaries of Pope. One of the landmarks in the history of literature is the date, April 12th, 1709, when Mr. Isaac Bickerstaff began to circulate his immortal lucubrations in the first gratis number of the *Tatler*. Here, at last, the easy prose of every-day life had found a medium in which, without a touch of pedantry, it could pass lightly and freely across the minds of men.

* * * *

The presentation of the first number of the *Tatler* to the town marked nothing less than the creation of modern journalism.

—Gosse, *Modern English Literature*.

Joseph Addison. (1672—1719.)

CHIEF WORKS: The Campaign (a poem, 1705); Essays in the Tatler and Spectator, including Sir Roger de Coverley Papers (1709-1712)

These papers (in the *Spectator*) taught the century how to write, and the lesson was accepted on this point with almost more unhesitating obedience than on any other. The magnificent eulogy of Johnson, who had himself deviated not a little, though perhaps unconsciously, from Addisonian practice, would have been disputed by hardly any one who reached manhood in England between the Peace of Utrecht and the French Revolution; and, abating its exclusiveness a little, it remains true still.

—Saintsbury, A Short History of English Literature.

Samuel Johnson. (1709—1784.)

CHIEF WORKS: Dictionary of the English Language (1747–1755); The Rambler (1750); Rasselas (1759); Lives of the Poets (1779) Boswell's Life of Johnson appeared in 1791.

Johnson in the fulness of his fame and in the enjoyment of a competent fortune, is better known to us than any other man in history. Everything about him, his coat, his wig, his figure, his face, his scrofula, his St Vitus' dance, his rolling walk, his blinking eye, the outward signs which too clearly marked his approbation of his dinner, his insatiable appetite for fish-sauce and veal-pie with plums, his inextinguishable thirst for tea, his trick of touching the posts as he walked, his mysterious practice of treasuring up scraps of orange-peel, his morning slumbers, his midnight disputations, his contortions, his mutterings, his gruntings, his puffings, his vigorous, acute, and ready eloquence, his sarcastic wit, his vehemence, his insolence, his fits of tempestuous rage, his queer inmates, old Mr. Levett and blind Mrs. Williams, the cat Hodge and the negro Frank, all are as familiar to us as the objects by which we have been surrounded from childhood.

-Macaulay, Essay on Boswell's Life of Johnson.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

(1667 - 1745.)

CHIEF WORKS: Tale of a Tub and Battle of the Books (1696–1697); Drapier Letters (1724); Gulliver's Travels (1726–1727).

Swift has the style of a surgeon and a judge, cold, grave, solid, unadorned, without vivacity or passion, manly and practical. He desired neither to please, nor to divert, nor to carry people away nor to touch; he never hesitated, nor was redundant, nor was excited, nor made any effort.

-Taine, English Literature.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

(1728-1774.)

CHIEF WORKS: Miscellaneous Essays (1765); Vicar of Wakefield (1766); The Deserted Village (1770); She Stoops to Conquer (1773); The Traveller.

In prose writing...he had quite a marvelous gift of seizing, in the recreative fashion, touches and traits in humanity—a gift shared by no one else in his century save Fielding, and of a kind quite different from Fielding's. Lastly, and for the purposes of literature, most important of all, he had the gift of an altogether charming style, which is impossible to analyze and very difficult even to describe vague y, so that it has never been successfully imitated, though Thackeray has, by a different route, sometimes reached very similar effects.

—Saintsbury, A Short History of English Literature

THE ORIGIN OF MODERN FICTION.

We have already seen that fiction as we know it has a large element of poetry mingled with its prose. The essay is prose, pure and simple; fiction is poetry mingled with prose—or it should be.

The modern novel became a living force about the same time that the English essay did. Richardson and Addison were contemporaries—at least, we may so reckon them, though Richardson was a quarter of a century the later. But, like the essay, the novel had its forerunners.

It has been the custom of writers on the history of fiction to trace the origin of the novel to the romantic tales, strained and mechanical, which came out of the Middle Ages and continued down to the very birth of what may truly be called modern fiction. Such critics, it seems to the present writer, have failed to understand the real and essential element in the greatness of the modern novel.

To the present writer that essential element is intimacy with the apparent commonplaces of every-day life, an intimacy which shows itself even in the most romantic of our truly romantic novels. If this is true, we shall find the beginning of modern fiction in Boccaccio's collection of one hundred tavern tales, which constituted the *Decameron*; in the collection of Arabian tavern tales, which went to the making of the *Arabian Nights*; in *Pilgrim's Progress* (written by a tinker in prison), and in *Robinson Crusoe*. All these writings, which still live and show surprising vitality, were utterly ignored in their own day. Boccaccio was ashamed to admit he had written the

Decameron; the Arabian Nights has not to this day been recognized as literature by Oriental critics; and Pilgrim's Progress and Robinson Crusoe received no more attention when they were published than dime novels do to-day. All these publications were popular, but the critics sneered at the vulgarity of popular taste, just as critics to-day sneer. Whatever may be true of critics to-day, the critics of olden times were wrong in their estimates of the books mentioned.

The novel is essentially the expression of the common people, in that it is entirely different from the epic poem or the poetic drama; and we must understand that difference in order to appreciate the history of the novel.

Samuel Richardson was a printer. It happened that he was somewhat sentimental, and so drew to himself sentimental young ladies. They confided in him, got him to write their love-letters, and betrayed to him their little heart troubles. When he was well on in life his success in writing love-letters for young ladies, who could not in those days do it for themselves, induced a publisher to ask him if he would not prepare a volume of model letters—what we should call a "Letter-writer." He consented to do so, began to prepare a few letters, and innocently conceived the idea of making his sample letters represent a real correspondence and convey some little moral lesson. The result was Pamela, published in 1840. It presented the correspondence of a young girl, with all her woes and troubles. It was a confession on the part of a confessor of what he knew about the heart of woman. It glanced at many immoral things, though with a very moral eye.

We must own it was highly sentimental, and of an eighteenth century sentimentality which has now gone out of fashion.

Pamela was a young girl beset by an immoral lover. Henry Fielding found it so good a subject for satire that he began *Joseph Andrews* (the character was supposed to be Pamela's brother, beset by a bad woman). However, before Fielding got a quarter through his book he became so interested in his story that he forgot he was satirizing Richardson, and really produced an intensely interesting story, which was as vigorous and manly as Richardson had been sentimental.

Clarissa Harlowe, Richardson's best novel, and Tom Jones, the best of Fielding, came later. But the novel was launched, and a whole train of novelists appeared—Sterne, Smollett, Goldsmith, and finally a woman, Frances Burney. Swift, too, must be counted as part of the movement, for his Gulliver's Travels is a real story of the true genus of modern fiction.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

JOHN BUNYAN.

(1628 - 1688.)

CHIEF WORK: Pilgrim's Progress (1678-1684).

He was a born novelist. He could have been an admirable dramatist. He is a great autobiographer. He is not a great reasoner; but he could see everything that was within the range of his sight, and tell what he saw infallibly; he had an admirable wit, and one of the greatest gifts of phrase—of picking up the right word or the right half-dozen words—that man has ever had.

—Saintsbury, A Short History of English Literature.

Daniel Defoe.

(1661 - 1731.)

CHIEF WORKS: Defoe wrote several hundred works, but he is remembered chiefly for his Robinson Crusoe (1719); other novels are Captain Jack, Roxana, Moll Flanders.

Amidst these finished and perfect writings [the essays of Addison and Steele] a new kind makes its appearance, appropriate to the public tendencies and circumstances, the anti-romantic novel, the work and the reading of positive minds, observers and moralists, destined not to exalt and amuse the imagination, like the nove s of Spain and the Middle Ages, not to reproduce or embellish conversation, like the novels of France and the seventeenth century, but to depict real life, to describe characters, to suggest plans of conduct and judge mot ves of action. It was a strange apparition, and like the voice of a people buried under ground, when, amidst the splendid corruption of high life, this severe emanation of the middle class welled up, and when the obscenities of Mrs. Aphra Behn, still the diversion of ladies of fashion, were found on the same table with Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

—Taine, English Literature.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON.

(1689 - 1761.)

CHIEF WORKS: Pamela (1740); Clarissa Harlowe (1748); Sir Charles Grandison (1754).

Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded, in a series of familiar letters from a beautiful young damsel to her parents, published in order to cultivate the principles of virtue and religion in the minds of the youth of both sexes; a narrative which has its foundation in truth, and at the same time that it agreeably entertains by a variety of curious and affecting incidents, is entirely divested of all those images which, in too many pieces calcul ted for amusement only, tend to in ame the minds they should instruct.

—Taine, English Literature.

HENRY FIELDING.

(1707 - 1754.)

CHIEF WORKS: Joseph Andrews (1741); Jonathan Wild the Great (1743); The History of Tom Jones (1749); Amelia (1751).

Fielding protests on behalf of nature; and certainly, to see his actions and his person, we might think him made expressly for that; a robust, strongly-built man, above six feet high, sanguine, affectionate, and brave, but imprudent, extravagant, a drinker, a roysterer, ruined, as it were, by heirloom, having seen the ups and the downs of life, bespattered, but always jolly.

* * * * *

We read his books as we drink a pure, wholesome, and rough wine which cheers and fortifies us, and which wants nothing but bouquet.

—Taine, English Literature.

LAURENCE STERNE.

(1713 - 1768.)

CHIEF WORK: Tristram Shandy (1760).

GEORGE TOBIAS SMOLLETT.

(1721 - 1771.)

CHIEF WORKS: Roderick Random (1747); Peregrine Pickle (1751); Humphrey Clinker (1771).

VI.

THE NEW POETRY.

The age of Shakspere and his fellows is commonly called the "Golden Age" of English poetry, because in that age our poetry attained its highest truly poetic expression. It was free, untrammeled, and filled with genius. The inspiration of genius dictated its form, and whatever the subject might be (the subject was always a matter of chance or popular demand), it was treated with the buoyant spirit of youth, of the manhood of a nation.

The second age has as appropriately been called the "Augustan" or "Classical" age. Dryden, Pope, Addison, and their fellows were all undoubted masters of technique. They studied the models of ancient literatures, and learned to polish and refine with as deft a grace as has ever been known in the whole history of English literature. Literary form was brought to perfection both in verse and in prose. The perfection of prose was a great boon to our literary progress, for it made possible the novel in all its rich variety. We found the poetry of Dryden and Pope very dry, however, and this dryness continued to increase until a revolt from it was unavoidable.

We see early signs of revolt in Cowper, whose diction is more mellow by far than the glittering coldness of Pope's couplets, but it was Burns who was the great-forerunner of the new movement.

Burns stands in the same relation to the romantic movement of the nineteenth century as

Chaucer did to the poetic outburst of the age of Elizabeth, or Defoe did to the beginning of the modern novel in Richardson and Fielding. In each case the manifestation of literary genius was purely natural and inevitable, and there was no purpose of inaugurating a new movement, nor any consciousness at the time that a new movement had been inaugurated.

Burns was a Scotch peasant of the poorest class. He was a laborer on a farm, and received little or no education. He wrote verses merely for his own amusement, and made love to all the country girls because he was so full of passion. At last a slender volume of his poems was printed, and on the fame of it he went to Edinburgh. A new edition of his poems published by subscription brought him some money, and during one winter he was feted and petted by all Edinburgh society, literary and aristocratic. But that was the end. He went back to his native heath; struggled on for a few years more with a growing family and increasing poverty and literary neglect, till at last, while still a young man, he died. His work is irregular, fragmentary, and on the whole slight; but the best of it, especially his simple love songs, his Cotter's Saturday Night and Tam O'Shanter, have sunk deep into the hearts of the people, and his poems will often be found on the sparsely filled bookshelf of a workingman's home, beside the Bible, Pilgrim's Progress, and some forgotten volume of sermons, or perhaps the works of Shakspere. So it will be seen that Burns's immorality has been forgiven him, or forgotten in the mists of pity which forever must hang around his life.

Burns was the mere forerunner of the new poetry, not its true messiah. The so-called "Romantic" movement is usually dated from 1798, when Wordsworth and Coleridge published jointly the famous Lyrical Ballads. The Rime of the Ancient Mariner and Lines Written Above Tintern Abbey are unquestionably the best work respectively of Coleridge and of Wordsworth, and so, at the very outset of the careers of these two men, we have their best poetry at its best.

This volume of ballads was the outcome of long days of wandering over the fields of the lake region, afterward made famous by the two youthful enthusiasts. Accompanying them was Dorothy Wordsworth, the sister of the poet, who shared in all their thoughts. But no one else seems to have recognized the greatness of this little volume. Mrs. Coleridge, who did not share in the walks and talks, "gaily announced that the *Lyrical Ballads* are not liked at all by any." And this was very nearly true.

It is not hard to appreciate the simple loveliness of Burns's songs; and most readers will feel the weird fascination of the *Ancient Mariner*; but Wordsworth is hard to understand, and we owe it to his greatness to pause a moment and try to explain his significance.

In the first place, it must be said that Wordsworth wrote a little very great poetry and much mere poetic versification; and the strange thing about it is that he failed entirely to see any difference between his best and his worst. So it happens that no reader who takes up the complete works of Wordsworth is likely ever to come to like him.

What is more, a taste for Wordsworth must be educated. (Matthew Arnold's selection in the Golden Treasury series is perhaps the best volume in which to read him).

Two poems of Wordsworth's are immeasurably greater than all his other work, and contain the key to the greatness which he represents. The first is *Tintern Abbey*, which is a sort of direct statement of his creed, and the other is the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, which contains the same thoughts in more lyrical form, written several years later. The new poet discovered God in nature, first passionately realized that divinity rolls all around us, and that we are supported and borne up by the beauties which the senses constantly reveal to us as we look about upon the fair earth. As he looks on the enchanting landscape, he cries:

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

This has been called "pantheism;" but it has at any rate the sublimity of the words of a prophet who has seen God face to face, and that, too without going out to seek him, or doing more than letting his eyes penetrate the veil that keeps the rest of us in darkness still.

The influence of Wordsworth and Coleridge was felt through their effect upon other poets chiefly. The first of these to respond was Scott, in his immensely popular Lay of the Last Minstrel, published in 1805, seven years after the appearance of the Lyrical Ballads. Scott continued to put forth his popular and stirring, though somewhat unrefined and not delicately poetic, tales in verse, Marmion being the most popular, and The Lady of the Lake the most academic. In 1814 he turned to prose romance with the Waverley novels, leaving the poetic field to a new light, the meteoric Byron.

Byron, sixth lord of the name, came into the world with a deformed body and corrupt blood. Yet he was a firebrand, destined to set all Europe aflame. Byron above all other English poets has been and is still honored on the continent of Europe, was praised by Goethe, and more than any other writer influenced modern development of poetry in Germany, France, Italy, and Spain.

After writing some unimportant verse and a biting satire called English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, professing to bring down to date Pope's Dunciad, he went to Italy, and after a time came back with the first two cantos of Childe Harold. This poem professed to be intended to bring back the classical age; but in spite of itself it was romantic. Byron at once succeeded to the great popular audience created by Scott, and put forth in rapid succession his series of poetic tales. Toward the close of his life (which was a short one), he tried a new style in Don Fuan, which is an amusing satire,

full of poetry, too, and by no means so bad as it is reputed to be.

If any reader wishes to see Byron at his best, as we to-day regard him and find interest in him, let that reader turn to the poetic drama *Manfred*, and find there in concentrated essence the poetry of the hell that is in the human heart, or that may be. Byron is the poet of dark and gloom, the natural corrective of the soft and effeminate tendency of Wordsworth. Few English readers care for this in too large quantities at a time; and Byron, while he gives "darkness and gloom" in so many hundreds of pages, lacks the magic and poetic phrase so characteristic of the really popular English poets. He has more fire than delicacy of perception or music of language.

As part of the same poetic movement we should include Shelley and Keats. They came later than Wordsworth and Coleridge, but were the friends of Byron. Yet while Byron was reaping his rich harvests, their poems were hardly read at all. It was not till after their deaths that fame at last singled them out, and declared that Shelley was the most purely ethereal poet who ever wrote the English or perhaps any language, while for Grecian worship of beauty for her own sake, Keats stands among the very first of our immortals.

Both these poets died very young. Their lives are tragic and also romantic. Shelley gave to the world by far the larger amount of work; but Keats is judged by what he did accomplish. Shelley's Ode to a Skylark, Ode to the West Wind, The Sensitive Plant, and The Cloud, and Keats's Ode to a

Grecian Urn, can hardly fail to fascinate and delight any who study them with care and sympathy; and it is perhaps best to confine ourselves chiefly to these simple masterpieces.

Two great English poets (shall we not include Elizabeth Barrett Browning and say three?), Tennyson and Robert Browning, alone remain as especially noteworthy figures in the poetic literature of England of the nineteenth century. Both these writers came after the other poets we have been studying were no longer alive, or else had ceased (like Wordsworth) to be living forces in literature.

Let us consider Browning first. It was quite late in his life and career before he received any recognition at all. Then when people did begin to read him he was spoken of as possessed of a style infinitely more obscure than that of Carlyle. fact, there are many resemblances between the style of Browning and that of Carlyle, the chief difference being that Browning's obscurity was not premeditated. But Browning should not be judged by his obscurity. Any who will read Rabbi Ben Ezra, Saul, Love Among the Ruins, Prospice, and in fact almost any of the short poems which he himself picked out as his best and had printed in two small volumes, will not find Browning especially obscure. At any rate, the obscurity will appear as nothing when compared with the greatness of the thought and the far-reaching magnitude of the love. And then perhaps it will be possible to read Sordello and The Ring and the Book. Such poems as The Red Cotton Nightcap Country should not be attempted except by disciples of Browning.

Browning discovered God in the human heart as Wordsworth discovered God in nature. Like Wordsworth, Browning undoubtedly wrote much that is worthless and would better never have been written; and perhaps, like Wordsworth, he did not suspect that what he was writing was at times not even poetry and not worth writing. That makes no difference. In Browning we find *love* of a deep, lasting and holy kind, passion grand and godlike, and an eternal sympathy with the human heart in its struggles with the devils within it.

Tennyson's mission as a poet was entirely different. He did not come to discover any great truth, nor to reveal anything hitherto unrevealed to common man. He came chiefly to make it possible for ordinary people to read and understand poetry at all. He borrows Wordsworth's pantheism, Browning's love, Shelley's golden web of fancy, Byron's rush and picturesque gloom, Keats's Grecian light and purity, and adds to them his own consummate mastery of the art of verse. Tennyson is inferior to all his fellow-poets in originality of thought; but as a literary artist he is first and the rest (among writers of the nineteenth century) are nowhere. In perfection of form and skill in versification he is the true successor of Pope; but if he could not create he could at least appreciate the true spirit of romantic poetry. Even those who wonder if Pope was not the high priest of an age of prose rather than a poet at all, will not deny that Tennyson was purely a poet.

Tennyson is at his best in his lyrical pieces, such as *Break*, *Break*, *Break*, and the songs in *The Princess*. Probably the main part of *The Princess*

Tennyson ever wrote, and comes as near not being poetry. This is not true, however, of the *Idylls of the King*. In Memoriam shows us Tennyson at his greatest; but it is perhaps not unjust to describe it as full of echoing corridors and exquisitely carved chambers "which lead to nothing." Maud contains some of his best lyrical efforts, as, for instance, the passage beginning, "Come into the garden, Maud."

It is not necessary to mention other titles; but we may say definitely that nothing he ever wrote and chose to retain in his collected works is not worth reading. He had a very just sense of poetic excellence, and he strove after poetic perfection. He was the great master of poetic form; and but for him to give readable shape to their thoughts, the mission of the greatest poets of the nineteenth century would probably never have been appreciated by the average reader.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

ROBERT BURNS. (1759—1796.)

CHIEF WORKS: Kilmarnock edition of Poems (1786); Edinburgh edition (1787). All his poems were produced within a year or two of the above dates. For titles of best short poems, see preceding pages of this chapter.

After more than a century of sober, thoughtful writers, Burns appears, a song-intoxicated man, exclusively inspired by emotion and the stir of the blood. He cannot tell why he is moved. He uses the old conventional language to describe the new miracle of his sensations. "I never hear," he says, "the loud, solitary we istle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild mixing cadence of a troop of gray plovers in an autumnal

morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion to poetry."

-Gosse, Modern English Literature.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

(1770 - 1850.)

CHIEF WORKS: Lyrical Ballads (with Coleridge, 1798); The Excursion (1814); The Prelude (1850). The Ode on Immortality appeared in 1805. His best short poems were written previous to this date.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

(1772 - 1834.)

CHIEF WORKS: Lyrical Ballads (with Wordsworth, 1798); Christabel (1816); Biographia Literaria (1817)); Aids to Reflection (1825).

So stupendous was the importance of the verse written on the Quantocks in 1797 and 1798, that if Wordsworth and Coleridge had died at the close of the latter year we should indeed have lost a great deal of valuable poetry, especially of Wordsworth's; but the direction taken by literature would scareely have been modified in the slightest degree. The association of these intensely brilliant and inflammatory minds at what we call the psychological moment, produced, full-blown and perfect, the exquisite new flower of romantic poetry.

-Gosse, Modern English Literature.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON.

(1788 - 1824.)

CHIEF WORKS: English Bards and Scotch Reviewers (1809); Childe Harold (first part, 1812; second part finished 1818); The Giaour and Bride of Abydos (1813); The Corsair and Lara (1814); Don Fuan (1819); Cain (1821).

Goethe declared that a man so pre-eminent for character had never existed in literature before, and would probably never appear again. This should give us the note for a comparative estimate of Byron: in quality of style he is most unequal, and is never, perhaps, absolutely first-rate; but as an example of the literary temperament at its boiling point, history records no more brilliant name.

-Gosse, Modern English Literature.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

(1792 - 1822.)

CHIEF WORKS: Alastor (1816); Revolt of Islam (1818); The Cenci (1819); Prometheus Unbound (1820); Witch of Atlas (1820); Adonais (1821). His complete works, edited by his wife (Mary Godwin), were published after his death. For his more famous short poems, see preceding pages of this chapter.

There are elements even in Shelley which have to be pared away; but, when these are removed, the remainder is beautiful beyond the range of praise—perfect in aerial, choral melody, perfect in the splendor and purity of its imagery, perfect in the divine sweetness and magnetic tenderness of its sentiment. He is probably the English writer who has achieved the highest successes in pure lyric, whether of an elaborate and antiphonal order, or that which springs in a stream of soaring music straight from the heart.

-Gosse, Modern English Literature.

JOHN KEATS. (1796—1821.)

CHIEF WORKS: Endymion (1818); Hyperion and Lamia (1820); the Ode on a Grecian Urn was published in 1820 with the fragment of Hyperion, and the Eve of St. Agnes appeared in the same year.

If we define what poetry is in its fullest and deepest expression, we find ourselves describing the finest stanzas in the maturer works of Keats. No one has lived who has known better than he how to "load every rift of his subject with ore."

— Gosse, Modern English Literature.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson. (1809—1892.)

CHIEF WORKS: Poems (1830–1833); Poems (in two volumes, 1842); The Princess (1847); In Memoriam (1850); Ode on the Duke of Wellington (1852); Charge of the Light Brigade (1854); Maud (1855); Idyls of the King (1858–1886); Enoch Arden and Aylmer's Field (1864); Becket (1882).

The force of Tennyson was twofold; he did not yield his pre-eminence before any younger writer to the very last, and he preserved a singular uniformity in public taste in poetry by the tact with which he produced his contributions at welcome moments, not too often, nor too irregularly, nor so fantastically as to endanger his hold on the popular suffrage. He suffered no perceptible mental decay, even in the extremity of age, and on his death-bed, in his eighty-fourth year, composed a lyric as perfect in its technical delicacy of form as any which he had written in his prime.

-Gosse, Modern English Literature.

ROBERT BROWNING.

(1812 - 1889.)

CHIEF WORKS: Paracelsus (1835); Sordello (1840); Pippa Passes (1841); Men and Women (1855); The Ring and The Book (1868).

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

(1806 - 1861.)

CHIEF WORKS: Sonnets from the Portuguese (1850); Aurora Leigh (1855).

When the youthful Robert Browning, in 1846, carried off in clandestine marriage the most eminent poetess of the age, not a friend suspected that his fame would ever surpass hers. and long afterwards, he was to the world merely "the man who married Elizabeth Barrett," although he had already published most of his dramas, and above all the divine miracle-play of Pippa Passes. By his second book, Paracelsus (1835), he had attracted to him a group of admirers, small in number, but of high discernment; these fell off from what seemed the stoniness of Strafford and the dense obscurity of Sordello. At thirty-five Robert Browning found himself almost without a reader. fifteen years of his married life, spent mainly in Italy, were years of development, of clarification, of increasing selective power. When he published Men and Women (1855), whatever the critics and the quidnuncs might say, Browning had surpassed his wife and had no living rival except Tennyson.

—Gosse, Modern English Literature.

VII.

THE ESSAY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

We have seen that in Addison and his contemporaries the prose essay became a recognized form of English literature. Burke added the oratorical element, and gave us the most splendid and glittering of eighteenth century prose, thus preparing the way for Macaulay, who was far less cold and marble-like. And Gibbon at the close of the century showed in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* that history, too, could become true literature.

But the new prose was directly due, in a way, to the invention and perfection of the monthly magazine. In the eighteenth century, magazine writing was looked down upon, and only the worst paid of hacks, as a rule, contributed to it. The fact is, it may be said not to have existed at all, for such magazines as had been established had but small circulation. But with the beginning of the nineteenth century there appeared, first, the famous Edinburgh Review, and a little later Blackwood's Magazine and the London Magazine. The latter did not live as long as it should have lived; but it is famous because it was the medium which gave to the world Lamb's Essays of Elia and some of the best work of De Quincey.

Among all English writers none is so universally beloved as Charles Lamb. His life, devoted largely to the care of his insane sister Mary, who killed their mother, is truly pathetic, though brightened by his cheery humor. He was a clerk in the East India Company's office, and not until the close of his life,

when he had retired on a pension, did he produce the work that really made his reputation. He had, however, been writing those wonderful letters which place him in the front rank of all great letter writers.

Lamb is unique; but there is no doubt that in a way his whimsicalities on life have a certain relationship to the work of the romantic poets. While Addison and his fellows merely preached, Lamb poured out his lucubrations in the same purposeless yet exalted way in which the poets did theirs, only that Lamb wrote for pure love of his fellows, while the poets had a variety of motives, among which love was not conspicuous.

Nineteenth century prose is in no way essentially different from that of the eighteenth, but it took up what the eighteenth century writers had begun, and carried it on to heights of power they had little dreamed of. Lamb was the natural successor of Addison. De Quincey, a man of the most varied and wonderful talents, proved what might be done in prose criticism, so following in the train of Dryden; while in his "impassioned prose" he carried to perfection what Burke had only begun. The real follower of Burke, however, was Macaulay, who proved that the peculiar powers of oratory may be used in prose essays that are to be read.

Macaulay began by applying his remarkable method to critical essays, among which his essays on *Milton* and *Croker's Edition of Boswell's Johnson* are excellent examples, and likewise to essays on public and historical questions. At last he dared to apply the dazzling brilliancy of his rhetoric to history itself, writing his remarkably successful, though by no means accurate, *History of England*. At one time

Macaulay was the young man's ideal of an English prose writer; but his fame has waned somewhat, and his artificial style, the most artificial ever devised, has been largely abandoned for more simple and natural methods.

And when these writers had had their day there appeared Carlyle, in a certain sense the successor of Swift, though in his peculiar vein of biting satire Swift still remains entirely alone and unique. Carlyle, too, was a very different man from Swift. He invented a style of his own, marked by inverted phrases and capital letters, and employing a jargon of words with peculiar meanings, which he maintained consistently to the end, but which no one has ventured to imitate.

Carlyle was the great modern preacher of the "gospel of work" and the ruthless exposer of "sham." There is no doubt that he was a most powerful stimulant upon his times; but he and Macaulay are vast prose forces of the past. Lamb alone remains more popular than ever.

The prose essay has had many other illustrious exponents, such as Coleridge (who was prose writer as well as poet), Landor, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, and the historical and scientific writers; but the brief space of this outline does not permit a fuller reference to men whose influence upon our literature is historical rather than living.

Two later writers, Matthew Arnold and Ruskin, have applied the essay to criticism as it was never applied before. Matthew Arnold was almost exclusively a literary critic, but his works will undoubtedly rank as true literature, especially his essays on the English poets and his study of British Philistinism, entitled *Culture and Anarchy*.

Ruskin is in every way a gigantic figure. He was an art critic rather than a critic especially of literature; but his range of essay writing is wonderfully wide. For purity of English style he is without a question unsurpassed, and in Sesame and Lilies, The Crown of Wild Olive, and Ethics of the Dust, we have criticisms of life often rising to truly poetic heights, though extremely simple in form.

Had not Ruskin entertained impractical socialistic ideas and many vague theories, which to a certain extent mar his total accomplishment and cast doubt over that which is unexceptionable in his work, it is a question if he would not rank as the very greatest of all English prose writers. As it is, he certainly ranks with Addison, Lamb, De Quincey, and Macaulay, from whom, after all, he seems to stand far apart.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

CHARLES LAMB.

(1775 - 1834.).

CHIEF WORKS: Tales from Shakspere (with Mary Lamb, his sister, 1807); Essays of Elia (begun in London Magazine 1820; in volume form 1823); Last Essays of Elia (1833). Lamb is known for his two volumes of charming letters collected after his death.

Not only is he thus unique among English writers, but he is equally unique among the smaller and specially national body of English humorists. Nobody has ever succeeded in imitating him, even in his most obvious quaintnesses, while the blending of these quaintnesses with a pathos which is never more sentiment is a secret not merely undiscovered yet by imitators, but escaping even any complete analysis—a Proteus never to be bound by the most enduring Ulysses, but fortunately amiable enough to bestow his wisdom and his graces without any such process.

-Saintsbury, A Short History of English Literature.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

(1785 - 1859.)

CHIEF WORKS: Confessions of an English Opium Eater (1821); Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts; The English Mail Coach; Suspiria de Profundis; The Flight of the Tartars (the later works all comparatively short contributions to magazines).

De Quincey's historical position depends less upon details than upon the fact that he was one of the very first to attempt, and one of the most successful in achieving, one of the greatest turns in the long race of English prose style—the nineteenth century reaction from plain to ornate prose-writing.

—Saintsbury, A Short History of English Literature.

THOMAS CARLYLE,

(1795 - 1881.)

CHIEF WORKS: Life of Schiller (1825); Sartor Resartus (1834); The French Revolution (1837); Heroes and Hero Worship (1841); Miscellaneous Essays; Past and Present; Cromwell's Letters and Speeches (1845); History of Frederick the Great (1858–1865). Of his Miscellaneous Essays that entitled Characteristics and the essay on Burns are considered the best.

His bleak and rustic spirit, moaning, shrieking, roaring, like a wild wind in some inhospitable northern woodland, had caught the ear of the age, and sang to it a fierce song which it found singularly attractive.

—Gosse, Modern English Literature

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY.

(1800 - 1859.)

CHIEF WORKS: Lays of Ancient Rome (1842); Essays (1843—collected edition); History of England (1848–1855). He is best known by his individual essays, of which that on Milton is one of the most famous.

His *Essays* are not merely the best of their kind in existence, but they are put together with so much skill that they are permanent types of certain species of literary architecture. They have not the delicate, palpitating life of the essays of Lamb or of Stevenson, but taken as pieces of constructed art built to a cer-

tain measure, fitted up with appropriate intellectual upholstery, and adapted to the highest educational requirements, there is nothing like them elsewhere in literature.

-Gosse, Modern English Literature

JOHN RUSKIN.

(1819 - 1900.)

CHIEF WORKS: Modern Painters (1843—1850); Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849); Stones of Venice (1851–1853); Sesame and Lilies and The Crown of Wild Olive (1865–1866); Queen of the Air (1869); Fors Clavigera, Ethics of the Dust.

Mr. Ruskin's enthusiasm has fired more minds to the instinctive quest of beauty than that of any other man who ever lived.

-Grosse, Modern English Literature.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

(1822 - 1888.)

CHIEF WORKS: Poems; Essays in Criticism (1865–1888); The Study of Celtic Literature (1867); Culture and Anarchy (1869); Literature and Dogma (1873).

His style was one of almost impeccable correctness in formal points, glittering but not gaudy at its best, possessing the indescribable rhythm, which is never metre, of the best prose, pure without being pedantic in vocabulary, and at least sometimes attaining the very and mere salt of classical elegance.

—Saintsbury, A Short History of English Literature

VIII.

THE NOVEL IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

There can be little doubt that, great as have been its achievements in poetry and history, and not small as they have been in literary criticism and the essay generally, the nineteenth century, as a whole, will take future rank as the age of the novel.

The novel of Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, Goldsmith, and Frances Burney was wholly domestic in its nature. It was utterly different from the preceding stilted romance, coming as it did close to human life and the human heart.

The close of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth saw the appearance of no novel of the first rank. There seemed to be a period of complete interregnum. However, Jane Austen was writing, though her novels were not published, and Scott began Waverley, though one of his friends told him it was not worthy of his genius and he abandoned the undertaking. The Lyrical Ballads of Wordsworth and Coleridge, however, had in due time given birth to the Lay of the Last Minstrel and Marmion and The Lady of the Lake; and these were not very different from the Waverley novels only romance in verse instead of prose.

But at last, under financial pressure, Scott brought to light the unfinished beginning of Waverley, and wrote the novel almost at a heat. It was published anonymously in 1814, and at once made famous "the Great Unknown," for Scott did not acknowledge his work till many years later

The romantic novel proved to be as near to human life and experience, as vital with the blood of the great heart of humanity, as the domestic novel had been, and it was a great deal more stirring and picturesque. Scott was a masterly creator of splendid pictures and glorious pageantry, and in his wonderful descriptions we find the best of his work.

Scott died in 1832, after having given to the world a noble gallery of historic scenes and glowing portraits. And at once his spirit and method were taken up and developed in France by Victor Hugo and Dumas, and in America by Cooper.

Side by side with Scott there appeared also a new writer of the domestic novel, exquisitely perfecting on her "little bit of ivory," as she called it, the delicate study of manners and customs which should inaugurate artistic realism. At best the eighteenth century story-tellers were coarse-fibred and not particularly finished or artistic. Jane Austen was both finished and artistic. At bottom, like all the best realists, Jane Austen was romantic; her heart was romantic, and of course that tinged her work in spite of herself.

But Jane Austen's place in the history of English literature was a modest one. She was completely overshadowed by two great masters of the domestic novel who were the legitimate successors of the eighteenth century discoverers, and beat them completely on their own ground. The first of these became known almost as soon as Scott was dead. Charles Dickens was barely twenty-four when the Sketches by Boz were published in book form, as a result of which he was asked to write some text for a well-known illustrator. Dickens insisted, however, that the pictures ought to fit the text, not the text the pictures, and Pickwick was the result.

Scott's novels sold at very high prices to very aristocratic people—and such unaristocratic people

as could borrow from a library. Dickens's novels were nearly all given to the world in small shilling numbers, and were bought largely by the common people. If Scott had been successful, Dickens was more successful. He was at once accepted by the public as the prince of humorists and the greatest of realistic novelists. Critics have not altogether confirmed the verdict of the people, however, and insist that he was not a polished artist, nor even a correct writer, and that his sentimentality is fairly nauseating. A Tale of Two Cities is an exception, and David Copperfield is almost an exception. These are unquestionably his greatest works.

The other great realistic writer was Thackeray. He was much more the legitimate successor of the eighteenth century writers, but he owed as much to Addison and Steele and the other essayists as to the novelists, and in another vein from that of Dickens he placed himself at the very front.

Thackeray has one of the most polished styles of any English writer. Like Addison, he is constantly preaching. Some maintain that he never created a worthy woman, and many of his men are set down as snobs or asses. He is also called cynical. But those who know him consider him almost as kindly and lovable as Lamb, and a true gentleman.

Two women writers of fiction deserve notice, Charlotte Brontè and George Eliot. Of the two, George Eliot is undoubtedly the greater, and stands beside Dickens and Thackeray with her three greatest novels, Romola, Middlemarch, and Adam Bede. Perhaps Jane Eyre will live as long as any one of George Eliot's; but Jane Eyre stands alone. Not far below it is Mrs. Gaskell's Cranford.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

SIR WALTER SCOTT. (1771—1832.)

CHIEF WORKS: The Border Minstrelsy (edited 1802-3); Lay of the Lust Minstrel (1805); Marmion (1808); Lady of the Lake (1810); Rokeby (1812); Lord of the Isles (1815); Waverley Novels (1814-1830); Tales of a Grandfather (history of Scotland, 1827).

Scott, a novelist, critic, historian, and poet, the favorite of his age, read over the whole of Europe, was compared and almost equalled to Shakspere, had more popularity than Voltaire, made dressmakers and duchesses weep, and carned about two hundred thousand pounds.

-- Taine, English Literature.

Charles Dickens. (1812—1870.)

CHIEF WORKS: Pickwick Papers (1836); Nicholas Nickleby (1838); Oliver Twist (1838); Old Curiosity Shop (1840); Barnaby Rudge (1841); A Christmas Carol (1843); The Chimes (1844); Martin Chuzzlewit (1844); The Cricket on the Hearth (1845); Dombey and Son (1848); David Copperfield (1850); Bleak House (1853); Little Dorrit (1857); A Tale of Two Cities (1859).

No writer has ever had a more marvelous faculty of depicting what may be called town-scenery than Dickens. . . Further, he can people these scenes with figures, which at their best have a vivacity, an arresting power, again inferior to none. And he can adjust scenes and figures for several purposes, but above all for the purpose of humorous action tending slightly to the farcical, with a felicity in his carlier and better days almost unerring, and even in his later seldom far out. Yet it has been questioned whether the life with which his scenes and characters are provided is altogether human life—whether the world is not rather a huge phantasmagoria of his own creation.

-Saintsbury, A Short History of English Literature.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

(1811—1863.)

CHIEF WORKS: Vanity Fair (1847); Pendennis (1848–1850); Henry Esmond (1852); The Newcomes (1853–1855); The Virginians (1857).

Both in prose and verse..... Thackeray's characteristics, both for conception and expression, are wonderfully distinct and extremely original. His is the extremest known development of that mixture of the pathetic and the humorous which is latent in all humor, which Shakspere had brought out occasionally—as he brought out everything—which had been driven in and turned to a furious indignation by unhappy fate in Swift, and which both the time and his own temperament had allowed only occasionally to appear in Fielding.

—Saintsbury, A Short History of English Literature.

"GEORGE ELIOT."

(1819 - 1880.)

CHIEF WORKS: Adam Bede (1858); The Mill on the Floss (1860); Silas Marner (1861); Romola (1863); Middlemarch (1871); Daniel Deronda (1876).

So long as she was humble and was content to produce, with the skillful subtlety of her art, what she had personally heard and seen, her work had delightful merit.

George Eliot is a very curious instance of the danger of self-cultivation. No writer was ever more anxious to improve herself and conquer an absolute mastery over her material.

-Gosse, Modern English Literature.

PART II.

AMERICAN LITERATURE.

INTRODUCTORY.

American literature is a branch of English literature, and must be considered in connection with the literature of Great Britain. Yet it is a curious matter to note that English critics do not make any mention of American writers in British works on English literature, so tacitly suggesting that American literature is something apart and distinct from English literature. Surely Americans should not be slower to separate American authors from their British confrères, and declare that America has a literature which has a distinct national character of its own, young though that literature may be, and slight though none can deny it is.

On the other hand it is equally a mistake to exaggerate the importance of our own literature, or to study it to the exclusion of the great English classics. The literature of our country should be compared to the modern English output, say that which has been written since Longfellow became known. The great poets and essay writers in England who preceded him and his associates, should be reckoned quite as much an American heritage as a British. We are a new shoot grafted on the old tree. Perhaps the day will come when the young sprout will quite overshadow the old stalk.

Before taking up the American authors in

detail, let us first consider in what general respects American literature is distinct and national, differing from all other literatures. We will note a positive and a negative characteristic.

First, American literature is highly democratic -that is, intended for the people. An English writer says, "(Longfellow) has given more people a taste for poetry, and purified and comforted more young minds, than any other poet of modern times." This is a strong statement, yet it is highly characteristic of all American writing: it is for the people, and all the people, not for the few, the refined and educated, or for poets. Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, even Byron now, were poets who wrote chiefly for poets, and the common people do not read and cannot understand their poetry. The same is in large measure true of Browning, and it is also true of the great prose writers, Burke and De Quincey, and may we not also say now Macaulay and Carlyle? How different is the case with Longfellow and Whittier, even with a refined and exclusive writer like Hawthorne, or a literary discoverer and inventor like Poe? The English writers who have written for the people, like Burns and Dickens, have not been given first consideration in England; they have been rather snubbed in fact. But in this country the only literary honor we know is the liking of the educated and refined upper classes of our democratic society, The needs of the common reader, the peculiarities of his mind, and his personality as an essential element in literary composition, have received an attention in this country which they have never received in any other civilization in the world. Hence we

may say that Americans are the only natural and inevitable literary artists—for art is only the means for being effective with the reader. All American writers tend to be what Tennyson made himself for the growing democracy of the British Empire.

Second, American literature is not deep. The thoughts of Longfellow or Whittier or Lowell are puny beside those of Browning or Wordsworth, and Holmes is only a pleasant writer as compared with Lamb. It is useless for us to deny this negative characteristic, nor is there any reason for us to be ashamed of it, any more than for a pretty young girl to deny being young. The pretty girl is pretty, not deep; and for depth we must go to her mother; but we value the girl none the less for her lack of depth, and no one would pretend that she was as wise as her mother. Our literature is very young, and those who stoutly defend it against the very just charge of British writers that it lacks depth, solidity, only show how foolish they can be. It is far better smilingly to admit the imputation. We are young, but we shall grow older, and with age wisdom and depth will come.

So we see that the leading characteristic of all American writings is lightness and charm of

style, or natural, spontaneous art.

I.

AMERICAN PROSE.

Under the head "American prose" we will not include fiction, but leave that for later and separate consideration, turning our attention now to the essay.

It is interesting to note that nearly all the early American statesmen were prose writers of considerable distinction. Jefferson, Hamilton, and Adams were all accomplished in this direction, while Franklin was a prose writer of unusual ability, who in his Autobiography has given us a work of lasting and perennial interest, which is also in many respects a model of style; and without doubt his Poor Richard's Almanac will last as long as any English composition. It is true that he took his proverbs from other sources, and it would be a mistake to claim him as an inventor of his pithy sayings; but he did give them a form of his own, without which they would never have become popular. Few critics have pointed out the wonderful skill shown by Franklin in wording these proverbs, but a little comparison with the literal translations of Oriental material on which he drew will show how much he has done.

Our first real man of letters was Washington Irving, sometimes called the "American Addison." He wrote truly Addisonian prose; but the candid critic must admit that his language, especially his description, is far richer in the elements of grace, beauty and vital humor than the work of Addison. It is true that Irving is nowhere equal to Lamb (for no one who ever wrote is Lamb's equal); yet Irving has the advantage of Lamb in the variety of his pro-

ductions. He was not only a delightful descriptive essay writer, but a story writer and an historian. While the Sketch Book, with Rip Van Winkle and The Legend of Sleepy Hollow in particular, is Irving's best, yet in The Alhambra we have a book of prose essay writing, story telling, and historical description which nowhere finds a parallel; and the popularity of his Knickerbocker's History of New York will not fade for many a day, though the work is by no means a great one. His poorest work from a literary point of view is his Life of Washington.

Irving has had many successors who have followed worthily in his footsteps. Perhaps the most notable is Oliver Wendell Holmes, whose Autocrat of the Breakfast Table is as pure, as charming, as inspiring as it could well be. And among later writers there have been Donald G. Mitchell ("Ik Marvel"), author of Dream Life; Charles Dudley Warner, author of Back Log Studies; George William Curtis, and many of less note.

We have had at least one gifted critic, James Russell Lowell. It must be admitted that he is somewhat cold and academic; yet in his critical vein he is undoubtedly more popular, though by no means so acute, as Matthew Arnold. His fame as a poet is probably much higher than his reputation as a prose writer.

Poe, too, was a remarkable critic, but his criticism seems to have missed being literature, and so we remember him as the author of *The Gold Bug* and *The Raven*, as story-writer and poet.

But America has produced an essayist of a tribe quite different from that of Irving. Ralph Waldo Emerson must take his place beside Hawthorne, Longfellow, and Irving as one of our four greatest authors. He was a student of life in the deepest sense of the word, and he has done more to expound life than any other American writer. In many ways Emerson is to be preferred to Carlyle, in that he is more easily understood and that his fame

is wearing better. While Carlyle's readers are fall-

ing off, Emerson's are increasing.

To understand Emerson we must remember that he represented a philosophical movement (in New England it was called "Transcendentalism"), which traced its origin to Kant and Hegel and the other pure philosophers. It was connected with the great scientific wave of the nineteenth century, and at the same time represented the practical side of Wordsworth's pantheism (see his creed in *Tintern Abbey*). The philosophers and scientists put this new creed into formulæ; the poets expressed it in figures of speech; Emerson, best of all, explains it and helps us to the possession of a philosophical basis for our every-day lives and every-day thinking.

His earlier *Essays* are far better than his later works from this point of view, for in later life he wrote very much because he was expected to do so. He constructed his essays better, but he had nothing new to say.

Emerson had one imitator and follower, Henry D. Thoreau, who was the first great American to *love* nature. His *Walden* almost rises to the dignity of poetry.

But essay writing is not the only sort of prose in which America has distinguished herself. Among historians, Motley, Prescott, and Bancroft have achieved literary distinction such as few English historical writers have attained, except the incorrect Macaulay, and the father of all literary historians in modern times, Gibbon. The unfortunate thing is that our writers are more charming than profound, for not one of them can be compared to Greene in his *Short History of the English People*.

In oratory we have seemed to possess a natural and almost universal talent. Daniel Webster, the "Chatham of America," is in many ways a man of letters equal to Burke, though Webster is far more warm and vital in his style than Burke. Daniel Webster must be reckoned one of the very greatest of oratorical composers in the English language, and easily takes his place well to the front in the large company of British orators. At

the same time, probably not one of all those great speakers composed orations for public occasions which make such good reading to-day as the utterances of Webster at his best. Webster was in every sense a true literary artist and prose writer as well as an orator.

And beside Webster we may place the silver-tongued Wendell Phillips and the polished Edward Everett; while for single efforts, Patrick Henry and Abraham Lincoln stand so far ahead of others as to prove conclusively the statement made above that Americans are natural orators. It would be a mistake to include either these men or Washington as in any sense American prose writers, for their efforts were purely natural and spontaneous, but they do exhibit the natural American talent coming to the top on great occasions.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Washington Irving. (1783—1859.)

CHIEF WORKS: Knickerbocker's History of New York (1809); The Sketch-Book (1820); Bracebridge Hall (1822); Tales of a Traveller (1824); Life of Columbus (1828); Conquest of Granada (1829); The Alhambra (1832); Life of Washington (1855–1859).

WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT. (1796—1859.)

CHIEF WORKS: Ferdinand and Isabella (1837); The History of the Conquest of Mexico (1843); History of the Conquest of Peru (1847); History of Philip II of Spain (1855-1858, incomplete).

RALPH WALDO EMERSON. (1803—1882.)

CHIEF WORKS: Essay on Nature (1839); Essays (first series 1841); Representative Men (1849); The Conduct of Life (1860); Poems (1846).

Daniel Webster. (1782—1852.)

His speeches were in his lifetime published in three volumes; Vol. I (1830), Vol. II (1835), Vol. III (1843).

GEORGE BANCROFT.

(1800 - 1891)

CHIEF WORK: History of United States (1834-1854).

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY.

(1814 - 1877.)

CHIEF WORK: The Rise of the Dutch Republic (1856).

II.

AMERICAN POETS.

The body of American poetry is very slight, even as compared with the body of American prose. Yet we can boast of the most popular poet of modern times, and that is a great deal.

William Cullen Bryant was our first true poet, and he wrote but one poem that can be called very great beyond all peradventure, and that (Thanatopsis) was written when he was but eighteen. came out of a prose age and became a prosy newspaper man; but for a moment the divine light shone upon him. In later years he wrote some pleasant poems, and in our study we will perhaps do best to confine our attention to *Thanatopsis*, and such short and cheerful poems as The Waterfowl, To the Fringed Gentian, Autumn Woods, The Death of the Flowers, November, The Gladness of Nature, The Conqueror's Grave, An Invitation to the Country, The Wind and the Stream, The Poet, May Evening, The Flood of Years, The Crowded Street, and similar little masterpieces which have found a permanent place in the popular heart.

Our next poet was Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a quiet professor, first at Bowdoin and then at Harvard University. He wrote pretty pieces which were published anonymously, one of them the *Psalm of Life*, for which he was promised five dollars, which he never got. At last his cousin, John Owen, who kept a bookstore in Cambridge, urged him to bring out a little volume over his own name. Longfellow was very reluctant to have it known that he wrote poetry, but at last was persuaded, and *The Voices of*

the Night appeared. Its success was immediate, and formed the beginning of a long and highly profitable poetic career.

The little volume that contained the *Psalm of Life* was quickly followed by others, giving us *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, *The Village Blacksmith*, and *Excelsior*. In 1847 Longfellow began a series of long poems, the first of which was *Evangeline*, which was followed by *Hiawatha* and *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, and still later by the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*.

Longfellow never wrote a line that was not to some degree musical. Likewise he never wrote a line which was not permeated with purity as with a sweet odor. Of all poets, Longfellow is the easiest to read and the easiest to understand. And with it all he is a true poet in spite of all the critics can say. His poems are filled with beauty, nobility and truth; and while they are lacking in those grand truths and splendid beauties which characterize Milton and Wordsworth and Browning, still the simpler beauties and the simpler truths are just as necessary in the world as the grand ones. Longfellow himself has expressed the feeling which we all share when, in *The Day is Done*, he sings, as it were, of himself:

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe the restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters, Not from the bards sublime, Whose distant footsteps echo Through the corridors of Time.

For, like the strains of martial music, Their mighty thoughts suggest Life's endless toil and endeavour; And to-night I long for rest. Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;
Who, through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.
Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Next to Longfellow stands Whittier in the popular heart. John Greenleaf Whittier was a devout Quaker and a hater of slavery. He never married, and devoted his energies ceaselessly to the Abolition cause, writing a few poems between whiles, but never his best work. At last, when it was all over and the war had bought the freedom of the slave by the sacrifice of blood, the good old man turned joyfully and with a light heart and wrote those beautiful and wonderful poems which have made him so famous--The Barefoot Boy, Barbara Frietchie, Maud Muller, and Snow-Bound. If Whittier had begun writing poetry when Longfellow did, and had continued it through as long a series of carefully wrought volumes, perhaps Whittier would have been reckoned as great a poet as Longfellow, for his best work is equal to the best of Longfellow. But Whittier chose a different life work, and we must judge him by what he did.

There is another poet who is more original than any other in our literature, who began to write at about the same time that Longfellow and Whittier did; but while they were New Englanders, he belonged to the southern and middle states. This was Edgar Allan Poe.

The really fine work of Poe is limited to three poems, *The Raven*, *Annabel Lee*, and *The Bells*, and they were more in the nature of poetic experiments than serious efforts. We have never done justice to Poe, and perhaps never shall. He was an unfortunate and much wronged man; yet even his best friends eannot say that his volume of accomplished work in poetry entitles him to more than a tentative position. It is as a storywriter that we must rank him in our literature. He will therefore receive further consideration in the next chapter.

Our two remaining poets, Oliver Wendell Holmes and James Russell Lowell, were also prose writers of the first rank, and their fame as poets has been somewhat dimmed by that fact. The poetry of Holmes was largely occasional and ineidental to his prose work. His best poems, *The One Hoss Shay*, *The Chambered Nautilus*, and *The Last Leaf*, were introduced into his *Autocrat*. He wrote no notable long poem, and his eollected

poetieal works do not make a large volume.

Lowell was far more serious in his poetic attempts, and in The Vision of Sir Launfal and a number of short pieces he reached a high point of poetic excellence, indeed, the very front rank. His long poems, such as the Biglow Papers and the Fable for Critics we must consider from another point of view. In their day they had a remarkable success. Later generations of readers have decided, however, that they are prose rather than true poetry, and that their value is partly historical. However, in spite of all efforts to keep on reading them, we have ceased in large measure to do so. We find Lowell a little cold and professorial. But The Vision of Sir Launfal will always live.

In the opinion of many, Walt Whitman is one of our very greatest poets, in spite of the faet that his verse form is very irregular, and at times even unmusical. There is no doubt that

he is the most ultra democratie of all our writers.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

(1794 - 1878.)

CHIEF WORKS: Poems (1815–1846); Translation of The Iliad (1870); Odyssey (1871).

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

(1807 - 1882.)

CHIEF WORKS: Voices of the Night (1839); Ballads (1841); Evangeline (1847); Hiawatha (1855); Courtship of Miles Standish (1858); Tales of a Wayside Inn (1863).

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

(1808 - 1892.)

CHIEF WORKS: Poems (1837, 1844, 1857); Snow-Bound (1865); The Tent on the Beach (1867); Among the Hills (1868).

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

(1809 - 1849.)

CHIEF WORKS: Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque (1840); The Gold-Bug (written in 1842, took a prize of \$100 offered by The Dollar Newspaper); The Raven and other Poems (1845); Tales by Edgar A. Poe (1845).

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

(1809 - 1894.)

CHIEF WORKS: The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table (1858); The Professor at the Breakfast Table (1860); Elsie Venner (1861); The Guardian Angel (1867), the last two being novels; The Poet at the Breakfast Table (1872); Over the Teacups (1891).

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

(1819—1892.)

CHIEF WORKS: The Biglow Papers (1846-1848); A Fable for Critics (1848); The Vision of Sir Launfal (1848); Fireside Travels (1864); Among My Books (1870); From My Study Windows (1871).

WALT WHITMAN.

(1819 - 1892.)

CHIEF WORKS: Leaves of Grass (1855); Drum Taps (1865).

III.

AMERICAN FICTION.

Our first story writer was Washington Irving, whom we have already considered as an essay writer. His stories were almost essays, and it is not as a writer of fiction that he holds his place in our literature, in spite of the fact that his most popular work consists in two stories, *Rip Van Winkle* and *A Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

James Fenimore Cooper first drew attention to American fiction. His first book that sold to any extent was a professed imitation of Scott's *Pirate*. But Cooper soon struck a vein of his own, purely American, in the famous *Leatherstocking Tales*, which were as popular in Europe as in our own country. We had for the first (and perhaps the last) time a dramatic and fascinating picture of the Indian, the Scout, and the Pioneer, and these tales were told with the true story-teller's art.

But Cooper was nothing more than a good story teller. He had no very literary or distinctly original characteristics. Originality in American fiction was to be brought in by Poe, and literary skill and perfection by Hawthorne.

Poe and Hawthorne wrote at about the same time, and each contributed his share toward the perfection of a form of literary art peculiarly American. Poe invented the art of plot construction in short story writing and exhibited it in a series of masterly stories (including *The Gold-Bug, Murders in the Rue Morgue, The Purloined Letter*, etc.) In his *Philosophy of Composition* he analyzed this art

(illustrating the subject by his poem, *The Raven*, though he might better have taken one of his prose compositions). Poe's stories, translated into French by Charles Baudelaire, profoundly affected the art in France, and finally gave us Guy de Maupassant, who in turn cast his influence upon the English writers and back to America. Poe also worked a vein of weird psychology in his stories of horror, and did it so well that he has never been surpassed, and doubtless never will be. Of these stories, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *William Wilson*, and *The Black Cat* are among the best.

Hawthorne was influenced in no way by Poe; but he, too, had his share in perfecting the American short story. His first efforts collected as the Twice-Told Tales, and his subsequent Mosses from an Old Manse, revealed the part that beauty of conception and moral loftiness may have in fiction. Though Hawthorne never wrote verse, such a story as The Great Stone Face contains far more real poetry than any story of Poe's. And no writer of fiction that ever lived succeeded better in making a really artistic story the vehicle for a definite moral. As a writer of allegories Hawthorne is the modern successor to Bunyan; but with how much more finished and polished an art than that of the tinker's! Hawthorne's works are recognized as the very highest forms of literary creation, yet with rare beauty of imaginative setting they combine moral ideas of the loftiest kind.

As a master of style, Hawthorne may be compared with Thackeray. He is one of the most polished and perfect writers in the English language. In the introduction to the *Scarlet Letter* we find essay prose worthy of Irving or Lamb; while in *The Great Stone Face* we find poetic prose more truly inspired than anything De Quincey wrote.

Hawthorne is remarkable as being among the very few who have succeeded both as short story writers and as novelists. If some of his short stories are great, *The Scarlet Letter* is greater. Indeed everything he wrote is artistic in the highest degree.

We must admit, however, that Hawthorne did not sympathize with the common life of common people in the way that Dickens did, for instance, or even Scott or Thackeray. He was shy and dreamy, and wrote fanciful stories, located in cloudland. Because of this peculiar choice of subject he can never become so universally popular as Longfellow, or even as Poe in the small amount of his really popular work, such as *The Raven* and *The Gold-Bug*.

One other book alone remains to be considered, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Harriet Beecher Stowe was not a great novelist, for she was never able to repeat the success of her one great book; and it is doubtful if *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has had any special influence upon our literary art. We must say, however, that the occasion and the writer met most happily in that volume, and the book (if not the author) is great alike from the human and from the artistic side. Even to-day we find *Uncle Tom's Cabin* selling side by side with the sensational novels of the hour.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

James Fenimore Cooper. (1789—1851.)

CHIEF WORKS: The Leatherstocking Tales (1821–1841).

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

(1804 - 1864.)

CHIEF WORKS: Twice-Told Tales (1837); The Scarlet Letter (1850); The House of the Seven Gables (1851); The Wonder Book (1851); The Blithedale Romance (1852); The Snow Image and other Twice-Told Tales (1852); The Marble Faun (1860).

EDGAR ALLAN POE. (1809—1849.)

See chronology of "American Poets."

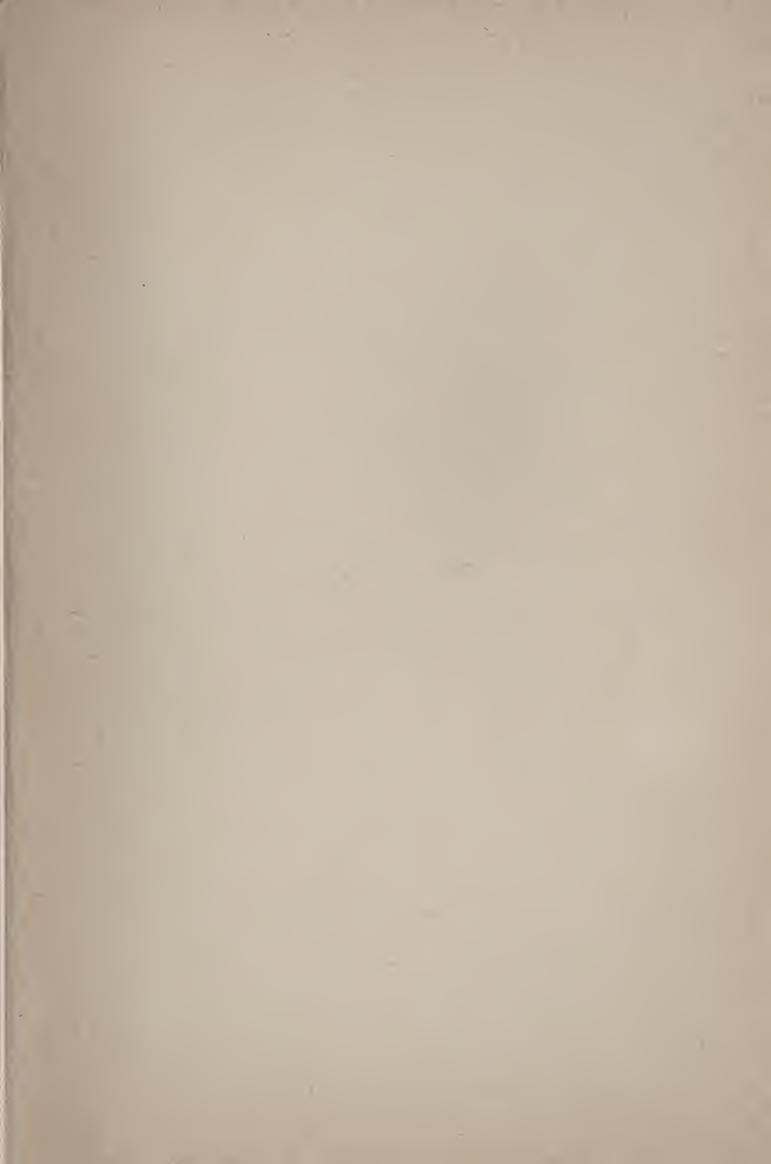
IV.

STUDIES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

- 1. Analyze Romeo and Juliet in the same way as the Merchant of Venice is analyzed in the text, tracing out the characters of Romeo, Juliet, Mercutio, the Nurse, and any others that may attract you.
- 2. Choose the finest passage of a page or less in Milton's *Paradise Lost* and learn it by heart, or commit to memory the *Ode to the Nativity*.
- 3. Read carefully Addison's Sir Roger de Coverley Papers, and write a short paper which shall attempt to point out the special reasons for the popularity of these essays.
- 4. Compare the poetry of Pope with that of Burns, and try to decide which is the truest poet and why.
- 5. Why is the Rime of the Ancient Mariner a great poem?
- 6. Compare Scott's *Ivanhoe* with Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans*, and discover which is the greater master of description.
- 7. In what respects is Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* like a great poem?
- 8. What is the leading difference between the humor of Thackeray in *Vanity Fair* and of Dickens in *Pickwick?*
- 9. Which is the more musical poet, Shelley (say in the *Skylark*), or Byron (say in the *Manfred* lyrics)?

- 10. What did Wordsworth stand for, if we may find his creed in *Tintern Abbey?*
- 11. In what respects is Browning like Wordsworth? (Compare Rabbi Ben Ezra with Tintern Abbey).
- 12. Give several reasons why Longfellow has become the most popular modern poet.
- 13. Compare Bryant's *Thanatopsis* with Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*. Do they belong in the same class?
- 14. Compare Hawthorne's *The Great Stone* Face or the Birthmark with Poe's Gold-Bug, and point out the characteristics in which each excels as a short story writer.
- 15. Compare Irving's prose style in any selections from *The Sketch-Book* with Lamb's *Essays*, or with Addison's *Spectator* essays, and decide which is the greater.





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